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TARASCAN FOLK RELIGION

An Analysis of Economic, Social, and Religious Interactions

PEDRO CARRASCO

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PREFACE

122 The author wishes to express his thanks to the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research (formerly The Viking Fund) for a predoctoral fellowship under which the library research and a substantial part of the writing of this paper were done, as well as to the Rockefeller Foundation for a grant which allowed the completion of the manuscript.

104 194 In writing Tarascan words we use the alphabet approved by the Consejo de Lenguas Indígenas in 1939. It follows Spanish usage in so far as possible.

The vowels a, e, i, o, u, are pronounced as in Spanish. ᴀ is a high central vowel.

The consonants b, d, f, g, j, k, l, m, n, p, s, t have Spanish values.

¢	is pronounced like Spanish *ts*
č	is pronounced like Spanish *ch*
z	is pronounced like English *dz*
ǰ	is pronounced like English *j*
ŋ	is pronounced like English *ng* in sing. In the Lake dialects it becomes *n*.
r	appical flap, like Spanish *r* in *cara*
ɹ	coronal flap
š	is pronounced like English *sh*
p‘,t‘,	etc. are aspirated

Pedro Carrasco

March, 1952

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1

INTRODUCTION

The Tarascans are one of the principal
131 Indian groups on the central plateau of
Mexico, numbering around 55,000 in 1940.
[161] They occupy the central region of the
State of Michoacan, mainly in the Lake
Pátzcuaro area and the Sierra west of it.
621 They live in sixty-six villages *(pueblos)*[1]
and a number of dependent hamlets
[101] *(ranchos)* amidst similar settlements of
mestizo Spanish-speaking people.[2]

Except for language, the differences between
171 the Tarascans and the nearby rural
mestizos are not very great from either
178 the cultural or any other point of view.
Four centuries of living together with and under people of European culture (Spanish colonial or modern Mexican) have made the Tarascans considerably interdependent with Mexican national life, and their culture, if analyzed in traits and institutions, might show more of a Spanish than an Indian heritage. The loss of Tarascan speech and consciousness is only one more step in the process of greater integration and acculturation into the Mexican nation, and many of the mestizo villages near the Tarascans have undergone this transformation only recently.

This interrelation with the rest of the nation is seen not only in the content of their culture but also in their participation in the social and political conflicts of Mexico.

National issues which have agitated
668 Mexico in later years have their local
manifestation in Tarascan towns. Conflicts
around land and church rage in many
Tarascan villages.

While the basic issues of landownership arise out of local conditions, the local groups fighting those issues are connected with national political groups. *Agraristas* (peasants claiming or receiving lands under the agrarian laws emanating from the Revolution) are found in many villages. Lately the Catholic nationalistic movement of the *sinarquistas* has found strong support among the Tarascans. Their different allegiances make for opposition or
[609] support of the national and state governments and local agencies, influencing the

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[1] The terms village and town are used indistinctively throughout this paper to translate the Spanish pueblo.

[2] West, 1948, 1.

1

INTRODUCTION

668 attitude of the people toward government officials and toward strangers in general.

[609] The political struggle today has a strong religious tinge, for or against the Church, and local religious institutions are involved. While the traditional system of organizing cult festivals is somewhat in decadence, the Catholic church is strongly supported by the sinarquistas. The government anti-religious policy on the other hand is associated with the agraristas.

123 The ethnologist approaching a Tarascan town becomes aware of these conflicts on his very first attempt at contact with the people. He confronts the problem of being classified politically and having to define his attitude. This has made work difficult or even impossible in some cases.

182 The problem, then, of integrating the phenomena studied in Tarascan villages to the wider phenomena of national Mexican culture and society becomes imperative for any meaningful discussion of culture change among these people.

121 The concept of folk culture as something different from national culture, yet related to it, seems to be the best conceptual tool with which to handle problems arising from the relation between a given local community and the nation as a whole.[2]

Anthropologists studying modern Indian cultures of Mexico have followed the so-called community approach. They have selected one town and have studied the culture of that particular settlement as a self-contained unit. This approach, although useful and necessary, has to be supplemented by relating the local manifestations to the national processes of which they are only part.

The nation can be considered the primary culture carrying unit in our Western civilization. Within the nation, people are divided into local communities determined by common residence (abstraction being made of what determines common residence). Cutting across local communities, other segments of society are not defined by common residence of their members but by some other factor such as property

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[2] The author experienced the need for this approach while working in the field, but his theoretical approach to this problem took shape in Dr. Julian Steward's Seminar on Anthropology and Community Studies, at Columbia University.

121 relations, occupation, ethnic origin, or religious background. Social classes are the main segments of this type. Within the national culture, every local and class group has a distinctive subculture. The peasants often appear to be the group with the highest degree of cultural distinctiveness.

National culture and society can not be described only in terms of local and class groups. Both these groups are tied together by institutions (money, trade, property, education, government, law, religion), whose personnel does not always coincide either with local or class groups and which often, as in the case of money or law, are not really the culture of a group but rather an expression of the economic, social and political relations between the different segments of society.[4]

In applying this approach to the Tarascan scene, the following reasoning can be put forth:

There are a Mexican people and a Mexican culture. The social system under which this people lives is characterized by a division into social classes. Every class has cultural peculiarities, *i. e.*, a class subculture. One (or several) of these classes are the peasants, people primarily engaged in the tilling of the soil. Correspondingly one could speak of a national peasant culture. Furthermore, these peasants live in rural settlements every one of which has a distinctive culture due to different native background and adaptations to local ecological and social conditions. In this sense every village can be said to have a local and class subculture, or folk culture for short.

177 178 Changes in the national cultures are the sum total of changes in every subculture plus their interrelations. Some subcultures, however, change more rapidly, or their changes are more decisive than others in determining changes in the other subcultures. In our case, given the backwardness of the Tarascan peasants and their lesser integration into national life, their villages are neither the sources of initiative for change nor the places where changes in the national culture are prepared. The Tarascans hold no key economic position and have no control of political power. They are, rather, in the position of receiving influences from the rest of the nation, and the stimuli for change often come from the outside.

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[4] Steward, 1950, 115.

178 177 One might approach the question of change from two points of view: first, how local conditions lead to change, whether or not this change is typical for the nation at large, and how it ties itself up to changes in the nation; second, how changes in the national culture, originating in other regions and among other classes, expand and influence change in the Tarascan villages. A combination of both factors explains cultural change in the Tarascan communities.

121 In order to discuss the relation between folk and national cultures as seen in a particular local subculture, some further definition seems necessary. We designate as "folk" those culture traits and institutions which are peculiar to the local culture and distinctive of it. These traits and institutions usually respond to local needs and conditions and we might imagine their survival (although of course in modified form) if the local subculture were suddenly isolated from the rest of the world.

National traits are those which, in the local subculture, appear as local manifestations of national institutions. They respond to the need of the nation as a whole. If the community were to become isolated, these traits would disappear or radically change their character.

121 105 In the following table the culture of Tarascan villages is classified according to this dichotomy:

FOLK	NATIONAL
Economics	
subsistence farming	production for the outside market
agricultural techniques	consumption of outside goods
household crafts	
local markets	taxpayers
	use of national currency
	workers in outside farms
Social and Political	
family	local government as branch of national and state governments
local government as organization and representative of local interests	allegiance to national political parties
	legal system

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Folk	National
Ideology and Religion	
unorganized beliefs	official Church (town priest, mass, etc.)
ceremonies centering around economic and life cycle activities	acceptance of outside authority in questions of ideology (Church, School, etc.)
folk Catholicism	
witchcraft	rational point of view taught in schools
total belief in folklore	

121 177 We might attempt a further distinction within the folk level between those traits and institutions which respond to purely local needs and could exist if all ties with the outside were cut (such as the family, certain beliefs, or techniques based on local resources) and those traits and institutions which are typical of the local subculture and represent a higher organization of local interests, but whose function is largely that of coping with life within the nation, and to a certain extent are branches of a national institution, like local government, folk Catholicism. In a discussion of Indian-Spanish acculturation this further division would probably be needed. In problems of present change, however, it has not appeared necessary.

[178] In the process of change going on in Tarascan peasant cultures we observe a tendency toward a leveling of cultural differences and toward a greater uniformity of national culture. Peasant subcultures change by evolving independently and/or by taking up the culture of the other social segments of the nation.

121 181 In this sense we study a process of change which is the same as that which Redfield describes as a difference between a folk and an urban type of culture and society. We do not emphasize, however, the difference between folk and urban, equating as Redfield does[5] folk to primitive, but rather we are interested in the relations between folk and urban as two different segments of our Western civilization characterized by subcultures which keep "primitive" cultural characteristics (mainly peasant). By folk culture we do not mean a modified definition of primitive but rather those subcultures within Western civilization which are basically organized around local institutions and still keep cultural distinctiveness in the manner of primitive cultures. These local groups are

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[5] Redfield, 1947.

121 181 historically those segments of our Western civilization among which industrialism did not arise (peasantry and colonial peoples), and among which its influences were latest to act. Thus, although in many basic economic, social and religious aspects the Tarascans are incorporated into Western society and must be considered part of it, they still keep many traits and institutions which characterize their subcultures as more similar in many respects to the primitive than to our civilization.

* * *

.121 The present paper is an attempt to present the relation between local and national cultures as seen in one aspect of culture, in this case religion. The problem is to see how changes in the economic and social structure of Mexico in general and the Tarascan area in particular affect the development of Tarasan folk religion. National processes such as the loss of communal ownership of land, the separation of Church and State, the capitalist development of Mexico, the Mexican agrarian revolution, the anticlerical movement and the rise of a militant Catholic movement among the peasantry will be discussed in their local manifestations and their effect on religion.

128 121 The economic structure of the peasant communities will be outlined first in order to provide a socio-economic background to our problem. The type of village community which is based on communal ownership of land — a type which was formed during colonial times by a blending of Spanish and Indian institutions — will be described first. The formation of large private estates *(haciendas)* from early colonial times on, and the abolition of communal ownership of land (1857-1910) impoverished the communities and increased the differences in wealth among the villagers. During the Mexican Revolution (1910 on) groups of peasants organized to obtain land from neighboring estates. In most Tarascan towns, which had no such estates in their neighborhood, these agraristas, lacking haciendas, seized properties from richer villagers or from formerly communal lands. Thus a new privileged minority was formed. The majority of the villages reacted against these reformers and in most cases won power in the local administrations. (Chapter 2.)

The main traits of the folk religion, the system of financing the cult, and the close relation between government and local organization of the cult will be examined in

121 order to show how the changes discussed in Chapter 2 brought about the decay of the traditional organization of religious festivals. 129 The heavy burden of financing the traditional cult had been a factor in hastening the impoverishment of some villagers. The agraristas were anticlerical and abolished the cult. In this they were fostered by the anti-religious policy of the government. The reaction against the agraristas, on the other hand, has been militantly Catholic, but the decline of religious folk festivals and of the body of officials organizing them still continues, although this reaction occurs under the guise of more orthodox Catholicism and is supported by the Church. (Chapter 3.)

The social content of the religious ideology as expressed in concepts of good and evil will be discussed in Chapter 4. The values sanctioned in religion are to some extent those peculiar to the folk culture, for instance, proper family relations. To the extent that they sanction national institutions, religious ideas and folklore sanction adherance to the Church and to private property. The religious tinge of political factions is apparent in the use of traditional lore by the Catholics in trying to prove the wickedness of the opposite party. Thus they use religion as an ideology in order to further their cause in the same way as they lean on the Church as an institution in order to support their social policies.

The question of belief will also be discussed. A more conservative attitude characterized by total belief in religious ideas and myths corresponds to the folk level of culture. The general trend, however, is toward disbelief in the content of folk ideas and acceptance of outside (national) authority (*i. e.*, of the Church or schools). Political allegiance influences this tendency. While some anticlerical individuals doubt basic beliefs of the Catholic religion, the militant Catholics show a trend away from the folk beliefs under the acceptance of a more orthodox Catholicism.

A summary of conclusions will be given in Chapter 5.

* * *

128 Chapters 2 and 3 are based mainly on published material providing some historical perspectives, and only partly on field work. Chapter 4 is based almost exclusively on field work. As practically nothing on the subject discussed in this chapter appears in historical sources, historical interpreta-

[p. 10b]

128 tion when attempted is for the most part inferential: seeing what older stages survive and how they are represented in modern material.

A discussion of Indian-Spanish accul- 121 turation in the sixteenth century is not attempted. Taken as a point of departure is the already more or less stable Indian colonial culture of the so-called Indian republics at the end of the eighteenth century. Our main source of information 127 is a 1789 official report on Michoacan, giving good information on the economics and political-religious organization of Indian towns. Part of it has been published[6] and another part has been used in the typewritten copy appended to Osbourn, 1941. References in other works are ably summarized and quoted by León.[7] Much more material undoubtedly can be recovered from archives in Mexico City and Michoacan. An important kind of document are the *pindecuarios,* lists of the towns' financial obligations and their officials for every religious celebration.[8] They provide information transitional to the nineteenth century. A good picture of Tarascan cul- 114 ture in the late-nineteenth century, on the eve of the Mexican Revolution, is provided by León, Lumholtz and Starr.[9] Modern material also throws light on preceding periods, providing a fuller description of what in older sources is barely sketched.

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Among the post-revolutionary studies, Sáenz[10] shows great insight into the political conflict in La Cañada villages. Simpson's *Ejido* includes as one of his case studies the history of the land reforms in one Tarascan community. The names used are fictitious but it is evident that the area is the Zacapu swamp and the village in question is most probably Tarejero.[11] Mendieta y Núñez summarizes the existing literature on the Tarascans from pre-Spanish to modern times. His monograph is based primarily on published sources but contains some original material. The chapters on the agrarian problem by Fausto Galván Campos are particularly useful.[12]

Practically all field work in the present 122 period has been done as part of a coopera- 114 tive project of American and Mexican in-

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[6] Estado . . . , 1944.
[7] León, 1906.
[8] Fragments of such documents have been published in Rivera, 1888, 330–34 (for the village of Coeneo in 1767); Ocampo, 1900, 386–90 (for San Francisco in 1816) and León, 1906, 425–427 (for Pichátaro, no date).
[9] León, 1906; Lumholtz, 1902; Starr, 1901 and 1908.
[10] Sáenz, 1936.
[11] Simpson, 1937, chapter xxv.
[12] Mendieta y Núñez, 1940.

122 stitutions for the study of the Tarascans.[13] Work began in 1940 and since then the 114 main investigation has included two community studies, one of Cherán, a large Tarascan speaking town of farmers[14] and Tzintzuntzan, a Spanish speaking town of potters and farmers.[15] West gives a general cultural-geographical survey of the area.[16] Other reports are unpublished as yet or are not related to our problem.

The field work on which this paper is 114 based, also part of the Tarascan project, took place in 1945. Although drawn for the most part from one single village (Jarácuaro), material on the ideology and lore of the Tarascans was gathered from several other towns. The purpose of the investiga- 121 tion was to obtain a picture of what we might call their world view: ideas and beliefs about the origin and nature of the world, the natural and the supernatural elements, the main religious concepts, their folk science or lore. This kind of material is most frequently expressed in narrative folklore.

Cherán and Tzintzuntzan, the two com- 121 munities for which full monographs are available, are rather conservative towns 101 where the agrarian movement has been weak. Jaráçuaro, on an island in Lake Pátzcuaro, where most of the author's material was gathered, is a town of hat makers and farmers. From a total population of about 900 only eight men were still agraristas in 1945. Most of the rest of the town considered themselves sinarquistas, were organized, and controlled the local government. Had the problem of this paper been stated before the field work, more material would have been obtained from predominantly agrarista towns, but this monograph deals mostly with the conservative and sinarquista positions. A detailed study of the Tarascan agrarian movement and what it has meant for the Tarascan

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[13] Rubin de la Borbolla and Beals, 1940; Beals, 1946, ix; Foster, 1948, 1.
[14] Beals, 1946.
[15] Foster, 1948.
[16] West, 1948.

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[101]

culture is greatly needed for an understanding of the problems of the area.

* * *

A comparative study is not attempted in this paper. Studies of Indian communities in Central and South America show that similar problems exist in these areas. The change of a folk culture in the direction of greater assimilation by the national culture is best exemplified in Redfield's Yucatan study[17] and it can be assumed to be a general process. The economic organization of the traditional cult is based on the primitive economic mechanisms of reciprocity of services and gifts. Under the impact of a modern economy this organization becomes inadequate and its obligations are felt to be onerous.[18] The attempts at radical change which took place in some Michoacan communities do not seem to be general. In some other cases the change away from expensive obligations to the cult is involved with conversion to Protestantism[19] or can be accomplished gradually without the violent conflict which characterizes this development in Michoacan.[20]

A comparative study of cases similar to that discussed in this paper would have to look into every local circumstance for the relation between the changing village economy and the economics and organization of the local cult. On the other hand the national pattern in which those communities live undoubtedly influences the form of the change, whether gradual, schismatic or anticlerical. The Mexican Revolution, which can be understood only in national terms, was the main determinant of the direction of change taken in most Tarascan villages. The influence of Protestant missions also depends on the national policies of the countries concerned. Any comparative study consequently will have to include the relations existing between the national and peasant cultures involved.

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[17] Redfield, 1941.
[18] Mishkin, 1946, 448; Carrasco, 1951, 106-7.
[19] For Guatemala, see Tax, personal communication; perhaps also in Peru, see Tschopik, 1947, 48, 53.
[20] Carrasco, 1951; Tschopik, 1947, 24, 43-4.

[P. 12a]

2

OOO THE ECONOMIC BASIS OF TARASCAN COMMUNITIES

THE INDIAN VILLAGE COMMUNITIES OF MEXICO

128 The starting point of our discussion will be the Indian village communities formed after the Spanish conquest by a blend of Spanish and Indian institutions. These communities will be described in their general traits, common to all of central Mexico, in order to provide a picture of the national scene, and also because concrete illustrative material for the Tarascans is on some points unavailable at the present time.

175 621 Before the Spanish conquest, most of the Indians in the central valleys of Mexico, including the Tarascans, were organized in communities, their members tied together both by kinship bonds and by owning land in common.[1] Such communities were called *calpulli* in Nahuatl and *calpul*, *barrio*, or *pueblo* in Spanish sources.

The larger political units were formed by a number of calpulli brought together under a common government by a ruling nobility.

175 565 The Indians of the calpulli, or commoners, were subordinate to the nobility.[2] The nobles held the high positions in government, war and religion. The commoners had to pay tribute to them either in kind or in work. This labor was employed for public works or in tilling the land attached to offices held by the nobles.

[423] [427] In central Mexico the nobles could own private land which was worked by a third social class of tenants (Nahuatl, *mayeque*). There is no conclusive evidence that this type of landownership existed in Michoacan,[3] although it is highly probable.[4]

[563] After the conquest, the Spaniards replaced the Indian nobility as the dominant class in society. The commoners' tribute now went to the Spanish state or to individual conquistadores (encomenderos). The Spaniards also owned land privately in contrast to the communal ownership of Indian communities. They engaged in agriculture (mainly in cash crops such as sugar), cattle raising, and mining. They held all governmental positions and to

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[1] For the Tarascans, see Relación, 1869, 15, 21, 29, 53.
[2] For Michoacan, see Relación, 1869, 13ff.; Zurita, 1891, 166.
[3] Zurita, 1891, 166.
[4] Relación, 1869, 34.

175 some extent they also engaged in manufacturing and trade.
565

Within this system the Indians comprised a special class or caste under a different system of law which gave them specific duties and protections.

[621] The Indian political units were either kept or rearranged through numerous resettlements and patterned after the Spanish township. These communities, after the contact period of the sixteenth century, with their special type of economy and government, form the immediate background for modern developments.

Within the general economic system of the colony, the rôle of the Indian was that of paying tribute and supplying labor to Spanish enterprise. [651] Every Indian town had to pay a fixed tribute on a per capita basis, for which the whole community was held responsible. [467] It was also the town's responsibility to supply a definite number of laborers to be hired by Spanish entrepreneurs. This type of forced labor with pay was called *repartimiento, mita,* or *coatequil.*

Indians who left their communities to work permanently in Spanish enterprises, either as free or debt-bond laborers, mixed with Negroes and whites, forming the so-called *castas*, and usually lost their Indian culture and language.

175 621 Throughout post-Conquest times, Indian communities had a great degree of economic and cultural autonomy, but they never were closed units. They comprised only one of several different types of social units in Mexico (haciendas, mining communities, urban centers) which made up Mexican society.

The Indian communities were called, in Spanish, *pueblos* or *repúblicas de indios* (Indian towns or republics). We will use village community or land-holding village as terms known in sociological literature for similar units in other parts of the world. They are Sorokin's Type 1 of rural communities: "a village community of peasant joint owners."[5]

175 621 565 These communities were to some extent economically self-sufficient but by trading, paying tribute, supplying labor to Spanish enterprise, and losing individuals to the growing free lower classes *(castas)*, they

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[5] Sorokin, 1930, 1:560.

175 621 fitted into the class system of colonial Mexico.

[565] Every Indian community was also a cultural unit and had a large degree of cultural distinctiveness. These cultures, however, were also strongly influenced by national, economic, governmental and religious institutions. They are characterized as folk or local peasant cultures.

175 621 423 The other main type of social unit in rural Mexico was the privately owned estate, in Spanish, *hacienda*. Haciendas can be included in Sorokin's Type 5 of rural communities: "a latifundian, manorial, or large estate type of rural agregate (privately owned)."[6] The conflict between these two types of social units, pueblo and hacienda, is the essence of the history of rural Mexico. During this conflict the village communities receded in the face of the growing haciendas, while within the villages the trend was toward individualization of landownership and toward becoming Sorokin's Type 3, *i. e.* "a rural aggregate of individual farmer-owners."[7]

* * *

175 621 423 The colonial village community was the primary economic unit, to some extent self-sufficient but never completely so. In a society based on agriculture, it was the main landowning unit. Every village community had the following kinds of communal land: *fundo legal,* the site on which the town was built; *ejido,* land for the common use of all the villagers (mainly woods and pasture lands); *tierras de repartimiento,* land owned by the community but allotted for the personal use of the villagers; and finally *propios,* lands which were communally worked, or more frequently rented out. The produce of these was kept as a community fund (*caja de comunidad*) and used to defray municipal expenses.[8] Important among these expenses are those related to the organization of the 175 cult and the support of the Church.[9]

[241] [463] Agriculture was the economic basis of most of these communities. Many household crafts were also of great importance. In some industries, products were consumed in the household; in others, they [438] were traded over certain areas. There was much town specialization in those crafts which involved intense commerce.

175 556 For various reasons differences in wealth came to exist within the community: The Indian nobility kept some of their private

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[6] *Ibid.*, 563.
[7] *Ibid.*, 562.
[8] Mendieta y Núñez, 1934, 53-70; Haring, 1947, 174-6.
[9] Chávez Orozco, 1934, passim; 1943, Chapter 3.

175 [556] holdings.[10] Commerce also must have caused some inequality in wealth. Furthermore, it seems that the lands for distribution were not redistributed at certain intervals of time. 175 423 Private property prevailed within the community, although the property title was vested in the community and outsiders were excluded from ownership. This internal organization of private property among community members allowed some concentration of land. From early times all these factors produced differences in wealth within the villages, but the communal ownership of land, always basic, [621] maintained the solidarity of the villagers, as against outsiders.

175 624 The Indian communities were provided with an adaptation of the system of government in Spanish townships:

> "From one to four Indian *regidores* and one or two Indian *alcaldes*, depending on the size of the pueblo, were to be chosen each year in the presence of the priest and the local *corregidor* (later subdelegate), and relieved during their term of office of tribute and personal services. The alcaldes shared jurisdiction with the hereditary native chief or *cacique*, were aided by one or more Indian *alguaciles*, sometimes collected the local tribute, and had authority to make arrests and punish minor offenses such as drunkenness and failure to attend mass."[11]

175 The actual functioning of this system is documented for early times.[12]

624 565 With the Spanish conquest the higher strata of Indian society and the related culture disappeared, but the Spaniards also granted to the Indian nobles, mainly to the town chiefs (caciques), privileges which allowed them to survive for a long time as a privileged group within the Indian communities.

This surviving Indian nobility first had the prerogative of filling higher offices in town government. Conflict on this point arose very early because of the impoverishment of the Indian nobles and the commoners' reluctance to obey them.[13] On the other hand we know that Indian nobles kept a great amount of wealth and power until the early nineteenth century.[14] 175 623 The scanty evidence as yet published suggests that the system by which Indian nobles controlled higher offices gradually gave way to a system where the ex-officers

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[10] Zavala and Costelo, [illegible]-45, passim; Humboldt, 1: [illegible]-30.
[11] Haring, 1947, 174.
[12] Chávez Orozco, 1943, ch. 1.
[13] Zurita, 1891, 100-108; [illegible]; [illegible].
[14] Humboldt, 1811, 1:[illegible]-3.

175 formed a council of elders who controlled 623 community affairs and the nomination of new officers.[15]

175 This is the system which seems to be 175 typical of Indian-Spanish towns in Middle 171 and South America.[16] It has been best characterized by Tax for Guatemala,[17] 621 where secular and religious officials are arranged in a hierarchical sequence through which every man is supposed to pass. Those who have thus fulfilled their duties toward the community enter the category of elders and form a council which holds power and controls the giving of offices.

A basic trait in the political system of the Indian village community was the close interrelation of the religious and secular aspects of town organization by having civil officers perform some religious function or by considering certain religious offices prerequisite for the civil.

175 Native religion before the Spanish conquest was based on a number of gods rep- 771 resenting the different natural elements, economic activities, and the social groups formed by kinship and the division of labor 175 (clans, trades, towns, etc.). After the Spanish conquest, Catholicism was forced 797 on the Indians and a Catholic priesthood replaced the native one. A syncretism of [776] the Indian gods with similar Catholic saints occurred. This replacement or fusion of Indian gods with Catholic saints and also the preservation of pagan festivals by devoting them to the saints were acknowledged and even fostered by the Spanish missionaries.

175 Every Indian community was provided with a church, a priest, and a sexton. There 794 were also two or three chanters and two *fiscales*, old men in charge of calling the Indians to religious services and instruction.[18]

175 Very important in this new religion were the festivals connected with the yearly cy- 796 cle of Catholic ritual. They were organized by devout individuals who took care of a particular festival and assisted the priest. Civil officers also participated.

178 Part of the native religion not related to the Church rituals survived, because of 771 the considerable community autonomy, mainly as private ceremonies or superstitions relating to technological or life cycle activities (sickness, for instance).

These aspects of unorganized religion

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[15] Chávez Orozco, 1943, Chapter 2.

[16] For Peru, see Mishkin, 1946, 443-448.

[17] Tax, 1937, especially 443-444. The question of land tenure, however, is not discussed. For this point, see Wagley, 1941, 56-66.

[18] Haring, 1947, 174.

178 and the native elements incorporated into
771 the local Catholic cult made up an important part of the local folk culture of each community.

* * *

171 That Michoacan followed the same general process as the rest of peasant Mexico is well attested in a number of sources. West's recent survey of the cultural geography of Michoacan includes colonial data on the economic aspects (population, agriculture, settlements, and handicrafts) which show that Michoacan developed along the same lines as the rest of Mexico.[19] These economic aspects will be considered further, for many still survive into modern times. The politico-religious organization of colonial times will be discussed later.

THE DECLINE OF THE VILLAGE COMMUNITY

Together with the patterning of Indian
177 communities after Spanish townships, the
Spaniards introduced into Mexico private
423 ownership of land. They acquired large
178 estates *(haciendas)* which were worked with Negro or Indian labor and whose produce was primarily destined for the national or world market. These two types of land tenure, — communal property of village communities and private property of haciendas, — have been in conflict throughout the history of Mexico. This conflict began early in colonial times; it reached its climax with the almost complete destruction of the village communities at the end of the last century and the beginning of the present.

With Mexican independence began the
668 application of political and economic policies of liberalism, and greater decay of the
177 village communities set in.

423 The Indians were no longer considered a special caste under a different system of law, but Mexican citizens with equal rights. Although Indian tribute was abolished, the Indians also lost the protections afforded by the *Leyes de Indias* to their autonomous government.[20] The most important blow to the Indian village community, though, was the loss of their economic foundation: communal ownership of land.

Three centuries after the Spanish con-
175 quest, the Church had become the largest
794 landowner of the country. The fight for
abolishing ownership of land held in mort-
423 main by the church came to be the domi-
nant fact in the nineteenth century history
668 of Mexico.

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[19] West, 1948.
[20] Chávez Orozco, 1943, ch. 4.

175 423 668 This fight turned out to be an attack on inalienable landed property in general, including the Indian communal lands. The purpose was to free those lands thus removed from commerce and throw them to the free play of the market, creating a class [365] of small farmer-owners with a well developed idea of property which would make for social and economic progress.

175 668 423 The abolition of landownership by civil and ecclesiastical corporations was first written into law in 1856 and incorporated into the 1857 constitution during the period of Mexican history known as the *Reforma*.[21] The enforcement of these measures, in so far as they concerned the lands of Indian towns, was usually delayed until the end of the nineteenth century.[22]

175 423 648 The Indians' communal lands were allotted as private property among the villagers. Once the property title was in individual hands, with the possibility of being sold to anybody, outsiders found the way open to acquire land which, through communal land title, had formerly been reserved for the villagers. The greater economic power of the non-Indians, and frequently unfair practices, allowed them to acquire a great amount of land from Indian villages. The concentration of land in haciendas and the impoverishment of the villages were thus facilitated. This process was accelerated during the Porfirio Díaz regime (1877-1911) because of the general economic progress of that period. [471] The inflow of capital, building of railroads, development of mining and other industries, also led to a rise of land values and an increase of capital seeking to invest in land.[23]

* * *

175 423 668 648 In summary, after the reforms of the end of the nineteenth century, the haciendas grew enormously at the expense of the formerly communal land of the village communities or of land allotted to individual Indians who were not able to keep possession. On the other hand, the remaining village communities changed from units of peasant joint owners to rural aggregates of individual farmer-owners.

The growth of the haciendas at the expense of the land-holding villages and the change within the villages from communal to private property represented the general national trend of change in rural Mexico,

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[21] Phipps, 1925, 77.
[22] Callcott, 1931, 136.
[23] Phipps, 1925, Chs. 5, 6, 7; Molina Enriquez, 1909, 56-8.

175 423 668 648 up to the Mexican Revolution of 1910. This found its legal expression in the *Reforma* and subsequent laws aimed at suppressing communal property. The change, however, went at a different pace in different regions. Mexico, due to the diversity of its territory and population, is characterized by a very unequal development of its various regions, thus allowing different types of society and culture to live together even if connected and coordinated into a single nation. The political and legal changes of the late nineteenth century represent only the turning point at which this general trend of change became the dominant political issue and required expression in the nation's legal system.

175 423 In marginal regions, however, the landholding village, regardless of how many changes in its organization were required, survived and held its own against the haciendas, in the same way as haciendas had been the dominant type of economy in parts of Mexico at the time when communal ownership of villages was recognized and protected by law. Consequently, in discussing the development of a particular region like Michoacan, further inquiry is essential to determine to what extent and in what manner this national trend of change has taken place.

* * *

Private estates had been introduced into Michoacan by the Spaniards since the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. They began in northern Michoacan where the land was particularly suited for stock raising, and in the tierra caliente where they concentrated on cattle and sugar cane. This is the area where the hacienda type of economy predominated until the Revolution.

Information is available on the political-religious organization of Indian towns at the end of the eighteenth century (from around 1789) and will be discussed later (Chapter 3). In the economic scene, the impact of the haciendas on the holding villages was at that time already noticeable. Some of the haciendas, like La Guaracha in the Zamora area and those on the southern shore of Lake Pátzcuaro, which after the Revolution were subject to land reforms and which are today on the edge of Tarascan-speaking territory, were already in existence.

175 464 177 The villages in the northern and southern areas had to supplement their native economy with work in neighboring haciendas. This seems to have been the main factor leading to the decline and final disappear-

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175 tzen[42] and Jarácuaro. This was particularly
423 the case in towns near haciendas to
which they had lost their lands, as, for instance,
464 in the villages on the southern
shore of Lake Pátzcuaro. Work in those
haciendas was essential to the livelihood
of the villages.[43]

These differences in wealth within the
175 villages were responsible for the splitting
of the villages into opposite parties in relation
621 to the conflicts unleashed by the
578 Revolution, which will be described below.
No matter how violent this conflict became at times, it should always be kept in mind that these disrupting factors were never more than a tendency. The concentration of property was not large enough to lead to the formation of haciendas, and the village as a functioning economic unit was not destroyed. There are other factors, relating to land tenure and agricultural methods, to which can be ascribed the basic conservatism of the villages which still keeps the community together.

Practically every village has some communal lands left. Permanent agricultural
423 lands are still communal in only five of
the ten Cañada villages. There, title to the land is held by the town, but within the town private property prevails, and land can be inherited and sold among villagers.[44] Some other towns have, besides the individually owned lands, communal croplands which are worked in common, usually by the landless farmers, their produce going in part to the workers, in part to the town.[45] Forest land is communal everywhere, and all villagers have the right to gather wood or to farm temporary clearings.
[651] Only recently (in the 1930's), have the Federal Forest Laws required the payment of a tax and securing of a permit for those activities.[46]

Although cultivated lands are privately
621 owned the agricultural technique demands
241 the cooperation of the whole community.
Beals thus describes this system in Cherán:
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> "The so-called 'plains' consist of several large areas, subdivided in numerous privately owned plots. Maize and wheat are the principal crops grown. The 'plains' are cultivated in alternate years under supervision of the town government. Harvest dates are fixed by the town council; after the final date, the 'plains' become community pasture. Fencing of individual plots is not permitted, nor is planting in consecutive

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[42] Beals, 1946, 61.
[43] León, 1934, 155.
[44] West, 1948, 22-23.
[45] Loc. cit.
[46] West, 1948, 23; Beals, 1946, 31, 59, 60; Mendieta y Núñez, 1940, 279; Foster, 1948, 170-1.

175 464 177 ance of native speech in those areas, a process which began in the late eighteenth century and was greatly accelerated after Independence.

175 438 In central Michoacan, the Sierra and the Lake areas (except the southern shore), the land-holding villages predominated and were devoted mainly to agriculture and handicrafts.[24]

175 668 423 During the Profirio Díaz period, the application of the Reforma Laws abolishing communal property, and the economic development of the country brought about further growth of the haciendas.

In Tzintzuntzan, the formerly communal lands were distributed among the villagers, and individual titles had been given by 1885. Between 1885 and 1902, a large part of the best agricultural land and most of the communal, non-agricultural lands were sold, legally or otherwise, to outsiders who, with these lands, established haciendas.[25]

[311] In the swamp of Zacapu, a company was formed at the end of the century in order to reclaim swamp land. Thus, several haciendas were established in a swamp, which had been the property of the neighboring Indian towns. At least one of these haciendas seems to have managed to acquire further land from the village of Tarejero.[26]

175 423 In many towns, however, the Indians resisted the operation of the Reforma laws during most of the nineteenth century.

648 656 In 1902, the state legislature passed a law regarding the distribution of the property of extinct Indian communities *(Ley y reglamento sobre reparto de bienes de las extinguidas communidades indigenas*, 18 de junio y 4 de julio 1902). It provided that the formerly communal land of the Indians could not be sold or mortgaged; that in order to distribute the land every town should appoint two representatives; that in case the state government did not approve of the town's choice of representatives it should appoint attorneys *(apoderados)*; that the towns should entrust their land titles to the authorities; and that if the towns did not appoint representatives after a certain period of time the government would name the attorneys. In most cases it was the government which appointed the attorneys.

This procedure apparently was intended to keep the lands from being sold to non-Indians, but although the land of the villages was not sold outright, it was leased

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[24] West, 1948, 11-18.
[25] Foster, 1948, 171-2.
[26] Simpson, 1937, 464-6.

[P.166]

175 for thirty or fifty years at very low rents,
423 so the Indians were actually left without
X [648] land. This is reported to have happened in
[656] about fifty towns.[27]

The above information does not specify which towns lost their lands. The only concrete case cited is that involving the *jefe político* of Uruapan, a district which included several Indian villages. Unfortunately, no more information is available.

At the beginning of the Revolution, then, haciendas were found in the more level and warm areas north of the Sierra and Lake Pátzcuaro, on the southern shore of Lake Pátzcuaro, and also south of the present Tarascan region on the slopes toward the hot country. No hacienda has been studied nor is this the environment wherein the changes discussed in this paper take place. The present Tarascan-speaking area has not been dominated by haciendas, but is one of those where the towns of Indian peasants and artisans have survived longer, no matter what changes in land tenure occurred within the village.

The main reason for the preservation of
[178] Indian communities seems to be that this
area was less desirable for the hacienda
[133] type of exploitation. The mountainous
character, forests, and cold climate did
[132] not make it suitable for the introduction
of cattle or cash crops in large estates.[28]

The necessary background for our problem refers to the developments within the Indian villages in relation to the haciendas and to the individualization of land tenure as it took place from the late nineteenth century to the present time.

The changes within the surviving Indian
[621] towns can be described from two points
of view: (a) disrupting factors making for
[578] conflict within the village and breaking the
solidarity of the villagers against outsiders; (b) the basic conservatism of the villages, *i. e.*, the survival of fundamental economic conditions which tend to preserve the existence and internal solidarity of the villages.

The main disrupting factor is that of property differences within the village. As pointed out by Tannenbaum[29] for Mexico at large, the villages do not have sufficient land for the needs of all their inhabitants, and considerable differences as to property in land exist within the community, some people owning an adequate amount (according to local standards of living), some

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[27] Castillo, 1915, 144-5; also cited in Phipps, 1925, 119-120.

[28] West, 1948, 17.

[29] Tannenbaum, 1929, 56-60.

175 423 others being landless. This condition seems to have been present even at the time when land was owned by the village, wherever private property existed within the community. When private ownership became general at the end of the nineteenth century, the differentiation as to wealth within the villages undoubtedly increased.

Although no detailed statistics are available for the Tarascan area, the existing information shows that inequality in landed property within the villages was prevalent, although in different degrees, in the various Tarascan villages. It has been reported for the Cañada villages,[30] Urapicho,[31] Cherán,[32] Tzintzuntzan,[33] Paracho, Charapan and Jarácuaro[34] either for pre-revolutionary or modern times.

The range in inequality is perhaps less in some small Cañada villages, which have preserved as communal holding the agricultural lands of the community.[35] In a large agricultural town like Cherán, where laborers come to work in harvest time from neighboring towns,[36] the differences are considerable. A great number of larger landowners rent part of their lands on a share crop basis to other villagers, and there are some completely landless men.[37]

[609] Many Tarascan villages discourage the selling of land to outsiders, the approval of the town being necessary for such transactions.[38] The increased inequality seems to have been greater in those places where selling to strangers took place. At the advent of the Revolution, this was the case in some Cañada villages where the largest landholders were mestizos from neighboring towns.[39]

[796] [426] The custom by which individuals take care of financing a given religious festival also led some villagers to sell or pawn and later lose their lands. Such was the case in Urapicho before the Revolution.[40] In La Cañada this was not only a factor in hastening the loss of lands but also the way by which outsiders got hold of them, for the Indians pawned their lands to moneylenders in mestizo towns.[41]

175 423 464 In all towns where there are landless people, the latter go out to work in neighboring towns or farms, for instance Nahua-

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[30] Mendieta y Núñez, 1940, 291; Sáenz, 1936, 235-6.
[31] Beals, 1946, 131.
[32] *Ibid.*, 12, 61-2, 66, 98-9.
[33] Foster, 1948, 71-2, 173-5.
[34] Field notes.
[35] West, 1948, 32-3.
[36] Beals, 1946, 61.
[37] *Ibid.*, 99.
[38] West, 1948, 32.
[39] Mendieta y Núñez, 1940, 291; Sáenz, 1936, 235-6.
[40] Beals, 1946, 131.
[41] Mendieta y Núñez, 1940, 291; Sáenz, 1936, 235-6.

241 years. Therefore, men who own land in only 311 one 'plain' plant only every other year. Consequently, everyone tries to have land in at least 621 two 'plains'."[47]

Similarly in Jarácuaro, the whole island is divided into two sections which are alternately cultivated.

West describes this system as general in the Sierra.[48]

Given this system of cultivation, the resistance against selling land to outsiders is [609] easily understandable as all farmers have to work in close agreement. Any outsider using his land in a different way would disrupt the whole system.

This question of disintegrative versus 182 conservative tendencies within the villages can also be discussed in relation to a sub- 621 sistence economy or a market economy. No doubt, in proportion as production is for 438 consumption within the village, the easier 433 it is for the community to hold its own against disrupting influences; the more it is intended for a larger market, the more likely it is that outside influences will penetrate the life of the community.

The connection of any Tarascan village 439 economy, whether agricultural or depending on crafts, to the national and world 433 markets is undisputed and has been set forth clearly.[49] Part of the agricultural products, practically all handicrafts, and a sizable amount of labor are sold out by producers, while most consumption goods are bought from outside, with the exception of part of the food (housing and clothing to a much lesser extent). However, production of food, mainly corn for the villagers' own consumption, is basic to the economy of the villages and their relation to the national economy. This fact determines their attitude toward land and corn. 423 Land is the most desired form of property 435 and the safest way of investing money, because of the security it will give as a source [185] of corn. The ability to produce one's own corn is the supreme aspiration of every farmer.

433 An analysis of agricultural economics shows that farming on poor land in Cherán 241 (a prosperous farming town) and Tzintzuntzan is done at a loss; that is, production costs (equipment, taxes, labor, etc.) are greater than the value of the crop.[50] Owners of such lands could earn more by hiring out as laborers than by working their own fields.[51] This way of farming

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[47] Beals, 1946, 20.
[48] West, 1948, 39.
[49] Beals, 1946, 58-9; Foster, 1948, 145-6, 289-90.
[50] Foster, 1948, 75-8, table 14; Beals, 1946, 65-6.
[51] Foster, 1948, 78.

241 433 goes on because, as Beals says, "The Cherán point of view does not reckon agricultural activity in terms of interest, profits and wages, but in terms of maize in the storage houses."[52]

464 Monzón,[53] in discussing the Indian problem of Mexico from the point of view of Western civilization, considers the Indians together with the unemployed as a labor reserve, only occasionally put to use. If one views the situation from the point of view of the Western economic system and considers the fact that farming is done at a loss, the great importance of emigration,[54] [167] and the enormous response of labor during the war when laborers *(braceros)* were contracted to work in the United States, one wonders if the basic factor preserving the self-centered Indian villages and their folk culture is the strength of these, or rather the inability of the Western economic system to absorb those people whom the disruptive tendencies created by this system throw out to the labor market.

438 178 Handicrafts are very important to the economy of many Tarascan villages, and changes have to be examined in this field.

178 Throughout the Colonial and Independence periods, many changes took place in industries and their location. These changes have been described by West.[55] Of interest to our subject are changes as related to the disruptive and conservative tendencies within the villages. The development of modern industry in Mexico and the concomitant higher economic activity have caused, on the one hand, the decline or disappearance of some handicrafts which can not compete with industrial products, and, on the other hand, the further development of handicrafts which have found a better market and no competition.

178 286 Among the declining industries, the most important are textile handicrafts. Spinning and weaving of white cotton cloth, which was the most important fabric made, have completely disappeared.[56] Women's skirts are increasingly made from factory-manufactured woolens instead of the local hand-made cloth,[57] and industrial cotton or woolen blankets *(tilma, poncho)* 463 178 are cheaper than the locally made serape, and are frequently used even if the latter are preferred. Ironwork is another extinct craft,[58] leather work has greatly declined,[59]

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[52] Beals, 1946, 65.
[53] Monzón, 1947, 327.
[54] Beals, 1946, 98.
[55] West, 1948, 56-71.
[56] *Ibid.*, 64.
[57] *Ibid.*, 65.
[58] *Ibid.*, 70-71.
[59] *Ibid.*, 69.

[P. 19a]

178 and in some towns hat making has sur-
463 rendered to factory competition.[60]

Paracho, on the other hand, shows the
322 opposite picture. Here the manufacture of
wooden objects (bowls, vases, candlesticks,
178 chocolate beaters, chessmen, toys, etc.) has
[534] greatly increased in importance. The town
also manufactures guitars for Mexico City
[439] and Guadalajara buyers.[61] Santa Fe pot-
[323] tery has recently been selling to Mexico
City and even United States curio shops.[62]

The declining crafts are among those
178 producing basic necessities, while the
463 growing ones are luxury crafts depending
in part on the tourist market.

Both the disappearance and growth of handicrafts disrupt the economic independence of the village, for they produce an increased dependence on the national market either in selling the developed manufactures or buying what formerly was produced locally. As in the land situation, however, the older order is preserved to a significant extent. Handicrafts for the local market are still the main economic activity of many villages: pottery, shawls, belts, agave fiber bags and sacks, hats, mats, baskets, metates, furniture still provide the livelihood of many Tarascans.[63]

No matter how important handicrafts
423 may be for the economy of a given village,
land tenure is the factor which has pro-
578 duced the conflicts during the revolution-
ary period. This holds true even for vil-
lages predominantly devoted to handi-
[438] crafts, like Tzintzuntzan (pottery) and
Jarácuaro (hat making).

The conflicts which arose within the villages during the Revolution will presently be discussed.

THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION AND THE TARASCANS

After the peaceful Porfirio Díaz period
175 (1877-1911), characterized by the economic
668 development of the country, a period of
unrest began in 1910. Under the term 'Mex-
423 ican Revolution' are usually understood
both the armed conflict from approximately 1910 to 1920 and the various governments and their policies from the beginning of the struggle down to the present time. The Mexican Revolution is thus a very complex social transformation which includes all aspects of Mexican life. I shall discuss only those aspects of the agrarian revolution and reforms which concern Tarascan developments. The lit-

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[60] *Ibid.*, 66.
[61] *Ibid.*, 67, 68.
[62] *Ibid.*, 68.
[63] *Ibid.*, 56-71.

175 668 erature on this subject is adequate,[64] so no extensive background presentation will be necessary here.

423 The agrarian revolution was an outcome of the concentration of land and the influence of capitalism on the countryside mentioned before in connection with the decay of village communities. It revolved around the fight against the haciendas.

The solution has been the breaking up of the haciendas and the granting of land to the landless under a new type of tenure known as *ejido*.[65] In ejido, lands are given to the community of *ejidatarios* (ejido members), who have the right to use the lands but not to alienate them, ultimate ownership resting in the nation. [453] An agricultural Bank of Ejido Credit was set up in order to finance the exploitation of ejidos.

This change is the end result of many conflicting interests and opposing tendencies which have produced a very complex development. The more militant peasant groups (Villa and Zapata) were crushed by force of arms, and only afterwards were the land reforms of any sizable importance. These reforms, begun in 1915, were intended to restore to the villages the lands illegally acquired by haciendas. Soon the policy was accepted of appropriating haciendas as outright grants of land (ejido) to the landless. A number of laws were enacted, often changed and more often not applied. For a long period, red tape and other delays were the rule before any ejido was finally given. The workers resident in haciendas *(peones acasillados)* were excluded from distribution of land until 1934, the beginning of the Cárdenas administration (1934-1940), during which the land reforms were speeded up and really enforced.

423 The outcome today is that the hacienda has been replaced by two types of ejido: the individual ejido in which every ejidatario receives a lot which he works by himself; and collective ejidos which are worked cooperatively. Collective ejidos were attempted in the 'twenties and a case in Michoacan has been described,[66] but the individual ejido has been the rule. Only during Cárdenas' period were collective ejidos set up in those areas where a highly commercial, large-scale exploitation prevailed in the production of foodstuffs or of raw materials for industry.

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[64] Tannenbaum, 1929; Simpson, 1937; Whetten, 1948.

[65] This ejido is to be distinguished from the commons of colonial villages, also called ejido.

[66] Simpson, 1937, Chap. xxv.

423 The individual ejido is a turn back to
small exploitation. No technological im-
provements have been made, no credit is
received from the Ejido Bank, and in some
cases corn for subsistence is now grown
instead of a former commercial crop. Col-
lective ejidos, on the contrary, are financed
by the Ejido Bank and are under its ulti-
[453] mate control. This is a good example of
the state intervention in production which
characterizes the present development of
world economy.

* * *

175 As stated when discussing the decline of
the Indian village community in Michoa-
423 can, at the time of the Mexican Revolution,
668 a number of haciendas were near the Tara-
scan region. Some villages had lost most
of their lands and included great numbers
of landless people. However, this is not
typical of Tarascan villages. Most of them
were and are villages of farmer-owners
and craftsmen. Although most Tarascans
had not lost lands to haciendas, private
ownership of land prevailed and there was
within the village noticeable inequality in
wealth. Relatively large, medium and
small landowners, sharecroppers, and land-
less laborers were to be found. In some
towns outsiders owned a considerable
amount of land. Consequently, the agrarian
aspects of the Mexican Revolution, *i. e.*, the
fight to get land from the haciendas, have
been mainly external to most Tarascan vil-
lages, and the agrarian conflict caused by
inequality within the village assumed here
a peculiar form.

[669] No good information is available as to the extent to which Tarascans participated in the armed conflicts, although some fought with agrarian revolutionists (Zapatistas and Villistas). The land tenure situation is reflected in the extent to which agrarian reforms have been carried out. Villages near haciendas have received ejidos, but the other villages have not, although agrarian conflicts also arose.

All the existing ejidos are of the individ-
ual type. In only one case (Tarajero) was
collective exploitation attempted for some
time. The people of Tarajero petitioned for
land in 1915, and finally received it in 1924.
It was good fertile land in a drained
swamp, and, while part of former hacien-
das, the land had been used for commercial
production. The agraristas decided to ex-
ploit it collectively. It seems, however,
[661] that the directing committee began to ap-
propriate most of the profits derived from
the exploitation, reducing the rest of the

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423
661

[661] ejidatarios to the level of underpaid laborers. ("The committee and its gang are living off the work of the rest of the people.") The upshot was that the ejidatarios managed to obtain from the government the abandonment of the cooperative exploitation and the distribution of the land into personal parcels. No further information is available.[67]

Ejidos were also granted on the southern shores of Lake Pátzcuaro. Here, ejidos were first established around 1920. Later on some were enlarged and new ones set up during the late 'thirties. Napízaro (originally granted 1936, enlarged 1938), Erongarícuaro (granted 1918, enlarged 1936), Uricho (granted 1920, actual possession given 1930, enlarged 1936), Santa Ana (1934), Tzurumútaro (granted 1921, possession given 1930, enlarged 1937), are among the main agrarista villages.[68] Other villages like Arócutin and Puácuaro have also agrarista groups but no information is available as to ejidos granted.

All these ejidos are individual. Lands are distributed to members by furrows, Tarascan style, and each individual lot is small (not more than 2 hectares). The tilling [241] of the land is done individually, although laborers are sometimes employed. The main crops are corn, wheat, and beans. [452] No credit has been received from the Bank of Ejido Credit. Woodlands are owned in common by the ejido. Its members can exploit them freely, but non-members have to pay a fee.[69]

In the Sierra and the Cañada towns there were no haciendas, and the granting of ejidos was not feasible. Only Tanaquillo in La Cañada had an ejido granted, in 1935.[70] In most villages, however, groups of peasants organized into agrarian committees in order to seize whatever lands [669] they could — communal lands or those belonging to the richer landowners. These revolutionary groups formed armed guards by means of which they seized and kept power in their villages.[71]

In some towns like those in La Cañada,
669 Charapan and Urapicho, a great number of farmers had lost their lands to richer neighbors or to outsiders. Haciendas had not
175 been formed, but there were much absen-
423 tee landownership and concentration of property. The people fought to get their lands back.[72]

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[67] Ibid., 477ff.
[68] Mendieta y Núñez, 1940, 285-88.
[69] Ibid., 283-4.
[70] Ibid., 293.
[71] Ibid., 281; Sáenz, 1936, 23.
[72] For Urapicho, Beals, 1946, 131.

[P. 219]

175 423 669 In La Cañada the local revolt took place in 1918, led by people from Tanaquillo. The lands which had fallen into the hands of mestizos from Chilchota, Purépero and Tangancícuaro were recovered and distributed among the revolutionists. Only in 1932 was this reform legalized by the State government.[73] In other cases, medium farmers were the rule, and there is not a very great difference in property holdings. Nevertheless, agrarista groups were also organized. Most Sierra towns had groups of this sort.[74] Cherán and Jarácuaro, the two villages for which we have most information, belong to this type.

In these small towns, which legally had no ejidos, the agrarians took lands illegally either from richer villagers or from the communal lands. In all these villages where the majority of the people was not benefited, there was really a privileged group formed. The agraristas made themselves the only beneficiaries of the lands seized, or distributed them without satisfying the needs of other equally needy villagers who had not taken part in their movement.[75] When seizing lands to distribute among [661] themselves, they sometimes took land belonging to other villagers merely because they had been political enemies.[76] They also seized formerly communal lands for their exclusive use. Hence villagers not belonging to the agrarista group were obliged to pay a fee to the agrarian committee *(Comisario ejidal)* in order to have access to the lands.[77]

423 661 In Jarácuaro, for instance, the rush grounds were formerly owned by the villagers, who used the proceeds from selling the rushes for buying candlewax for the temple; afterwards the agraristas exploited the grounds for their personal use. A similar case occurred during our stay on the island. A lowering of the lake's water level had left dry some flat land of considerable agricultural value. The agrarista group was trying to get the land from the federal government for distribution among its members, while the rest of the village wanted to distribute it among all the villagers (excepting the eight agraristas). At the time of our leaving (1945), the authorities were persuading the villagers to distribute the land among all people of both groups.

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[73] Sáenz, 1936, 23-4; 96, 255-6; Mendieta y Núñez, 1940, 291-2.

[74] All but two, according to Mendieta y Núñez, 1940, 280.

[75] Sáenz, 1936, 256; also Tarejero, Simpson, 1937, 471-2.

[76] Cañada, see Sáenz, 1936, 256; Mendieta y Núñez, 1940, 281, 291-2.

[77] Mendieta y Núñez, 1940, 279, 281.

423 661 A similar case was going on in Ihuatzio. Here an agrarista group was formed and was trying to obtain the new shore lands, which, according to traditional use, should be distributed among all the villagers.

[798] The opposition of the Church to the Revolution and the fact that the financing of the cult had been one of the factors that led many peasants to lose their lands brought about a strong anticlerical policy among the agraristas, who expelled the priest and forbade the cult, particularly the festivals. This connection of the agrarian movement with religion will be further discussed in the next chapter.

423 668 578 175 Thus, in a small farmer-owner environment a new privileged minority was formed, which seized the lands of political enemies or of the community, assumed control of the town administration, and attacked long cherished cultural values related to religion and the church. The agraristas kept power by armed force, being organized into a local militia. Except in towns where a great majority benefited from the changes, strong opposition was always evident. During the late 'twenties there were in the area some groups of *cristeros*.[78] Cristeros were anti-agrarian peasants in revolt against the government because of its anti-church policy. The main regions of the cristero movements were those where small farmers prevailed and consequently agrarismo was weak.[79]

The political conflict became so intensified that by 1939 the government had to send small detachments of federal troops to many towns.[80] The presence of these forces undermined the control of the agrarista militia. Shortly afterwards the agraristas were driven out of some towns, new authorities were established, and the cult was again allowed to function.

At the time of our field work (1945) this movement against the agraristas had become strongly influenced by the *sinarquistas*.

668 *Sinarquismo* is a political movement strongly Catholic and nationalistic, opposed to the government and with such traits as a semi-military organization, rallies, and a peculiar salute and flag. It won its initial strength in the late 'thirties in the Bajio region near the Tarascans and gained considerable mass support among the artisans and peasants. To the peasants it plays upon the failure of the government to improve their lot. While accusing the government

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[78] Foster, 1948, 175.
[79] For instance, Arandas: Taylor, 1933, 30-32, 36-39.
[80] Beals, 1946, 112; Mendieta y Núñez, 1940, 289, 292.

668 of stealing because it distributed the haciendas, it does not propagandize a return to the old order. It is supported by small farmers and even ejidatarios dissatisfied with the course of the land reforms. It promises the ejidatarios to rid them of the new bosses born of the Revolution and to give them as outright private property their ejido plots which now are ultimately owned by the State.

668 465 [452] Since the late 'thirties, the period when land reforms were more or less completed, the real wages in the countryside have been in decline[81] due mainly to wartime inflation. This fact together with the inability of the government to provide agricultural credit indicates the difficult situation of the countryside and explains the rapid growth of a protest movement like sinarquismo.[82]

668 The opposition to the agraristas and to the government which had arisen in many Tarascan towns has lately merged with sinarquismo. Sinarquista units function in many villages and many Tarascans are members of the party.

423 181 In the present situation, with the agrarian revolt receded, the Indian village communities, although greatly impaired, show a persistence of an economic foundation which is the basis for the survival of the

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[81] Whetten, 1948, 262.

[82] Gill, 1944; Padilla, 1948; Whetten, 1948, 484-522.

423 folk culture: some remaining communal
181 property; small private land holdings to a
great extent devoted to a subsistence economy;
survival of old agricultural techniques
and handicrafts.

In spite of this conservatism, however,
182 the decline of the village community goes
on. The concentration of land in haciendas,
423 the main process by which the village communities
621 tended to disappear, has been
checked. But other disruptive tendencies
operate within the village: small holdings
are insufficient for the growing population;
there is a surplus of labor which the
national economy is unable to employ; the
decay of handicrafts goes on due to industrial
competition; the loss of the remaining
communal lands of the villages continues
although under different forms. The agrarista
seizure of communal lands for their
exclusive use implies the decay of the communal
ownings of the village. The government's
restrictions on the use of forests or
[656] the formation of cooperatives to exploit
the woods further diminishes the communal
holdings of the villages.

Thus, in the economic sphere a basic conservatism is coupled with the pressure of disruptive tendencies which continually make the situation of the village community difficult without, however, being able to break it completely. The same contradiction is to be found in the developments taking place in religion.

[P. 23 a]

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CULT ORGANIZATION AND SOCIAL CONFLICT

771 In the Introduction, concepts of folk and national culture were presented. In Mexican Indian cultures the most distinctive aspects of folk religion are to be found in what we might call unorganized religion, i. e., those beliefs and rituals calling only for private ceremonials which are not connected with the Church and related ceremonial groups; they usually center around technological or life cycle activities. For instance, agricultural rites or concepts of diseases and ways of curing them are fields where more folk culture, and also more pre-Spanish survivals, are found.

771 177 Among the Tarascans, their connection with national life, greater than that of other Indian groups, has meant greater acculturation to the national culture. Technological rites are almost non-existent. One finds only miscellaneous beliefs about cooking, the hearth, or the influence of the moon on plants. [241] Only corn agriculture has a few more religious associations in the more conservative villages where idols are kept in the cornfield and candles are lighted to them. [821] [824] There are also a number of tales and beliefs about corn and the weather.

796 In the life cycle ceremonies the main religious aspects today are those of Catholicism (the sacraments). [754] [177] Only witchcraft and some concepts of disease form any significant part of the folk religion, although they are dominated by ideas about the saints and the Devil, and historically are of Spanish more than of Indian origin.

779 Unorganized (non-Church) religion is comparatively unimportant among the Tarascans. Most religion in the Tarascan culture has to be described in terms of the Church, a national (and international) institution with its own ideology, personnel, organization and particular interests. As it appears in Tarascan villages, there is a clear difference between national and folk components of religion. On the one hand are the priest and his connection to the hierarchy; and elements of the cult such as the sacraments, mass, rosary, etc., which follow the rules of the international Church. Other aspects of belief and ritual, on the other hand, though connected with those of the Church, are locally organized and peculiar to the local subculture. This is what we call folk Catholicism.

779 Changes in this folk Catholicism are traceable to the influence of the economic and social changes previously discussed. In this chapter the cult, its organization, financing and relation to the government and to political conflict will be discussed, while religious ideology will be dealt with in the following chapter.

The most profound changes in the folk religion affect mainly the cult organization. The basic traits of the folk cult itself have not been greatly modified during the period covered in this paper, and are similar to those generally found in all Middle America. A description of them will provide a background on which to discuss them.

MAIN TRAITS OF TARASCAN FOLK RELIGION AND CULT[1]

776 Tarascan folk Catholicism, although accepting the Christian God (Tarascan, *Kueràjpiri*, Creator; Spanish, *Padre Eterno*, Eternal Father) as the supreme creator, revolves primarily around the saints. The saints are sons of God, also those who followed Christ when he came to earth, and in general people who lived sometime in the past and 'won sanctity'. A male saint is called in Tarascan *tata diósʌ*, literally 'father or lord god', a term which also can be applied to the Creator. Female saints are called *nana iuɹísʌ*, 'mother or lady virgin', which means both the Virgin or any female saint. The mystery of the Trinity is not well known to the Tarascans. Christ is only the most important tata diósʌ. Sometimes he can be considered the same as God, but most often he is only his son. In some myths he is the brother of other saints like Saint James or even a brother of the Devil. Also it is not clear whether the various Christs venerated in different places are really the same God. The Christs of San Juan, Tingambato, Sopoco and Santa Fe, for instance, are said to be four brothers. Similarly the different local Virgins are to be considered as many different supernaturals.

776 As important as the supernatural being, is its image kept in a church or chapel. It

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[1] Most information comes from the late nineteenth century and the present time. Information for the eighteenth century is scantier, but so far as available it shows great similarity with later times, so the following description, although written in the present tense, can be taken to apply in its basic traits to that period also.

776 is considered sometimes as the residence of the saint, his abode being also in heaven, 778 but in many cases the image seems to take over all concepts of the supernatural and instead of a symbol it becomes the saint itself. Folklore is rich in tales about the apparition of images as synonymous with the saint. The images often appear to behave like a person. In different accounts they are believed to move, weep, or speak. If the saint leaves the church to wander, traces of its journey are seen on the image. People also treat the image as a person. Presents taken to it are often dresses. The image can be taken out when there has been no rain so that he (she) can see for himself the need for it, or, in cases of witchcraft, he may be imprisoned in a little jail until help is received.

Most saints are related to the social 776 groups of which they are patrons. Thus the Virgin of Guadalupe stands for Mexico. All towns and their wards *(barrios)* and also the trades have a patron and the cult of one such group is specially concerned with its patron who is its supernatural protector and representative.

In legends, saints can appear as those who give the villages their characteristic trades. There can be said to be a division of labor among the saints, each one attending to different localities or human activities or personifying natural elements.

Supernatural help is asked from the patron of one's own group or from the saint which deals particularly with what one wants to obtain. For instance, the Virgen de la Salud of Pátzcuaro is helpful in case of sickness; Saint Anthony is good to ask for offspring. In addition, most popular saints are petitioned for all kinds of things. The reputation of the saint and personal devotion decide which should be asked. Most famous in the Tarascan region are the Christs of San Juan, Carácuaro and Araró, the Virgin of Guadalupe, Virgen de la Salud of Pátzcuaro, the Señor del Resgate (an Ecce Homo) of Tzintzuntzan, Saint Anthony of Morelia, and many others.

Sometimes new saints appear, which in a short time become very popular, while some others decline in importance. For this reason the most important saint of a town is in some cases not its patron saint. For instance the Christs of Parangaricutiro, Tingambato, Zopoco, Santa Fe and the Señor del Resgate in Tzintzuntzan have all superseded in importance the patron saints of those places.

796 The cult ceremonies are arranged after the Catholic yearly cycle of ceremonials. Every ceremonial has the rituals prescribed by the Catholic Church, but the popular form of the cult also includes elements of ritual-like dances, which are peculiar to the folk culture. Many other activities of a non-religious character, such as social gatherings, entertainment and trade, are also associated with religious celebrations.

There is also a folk organization of festivals based on the individual sponsorship of the ceremony or part of it. Sponsors are called *cargueros* and sponsorship *cargo* (literally, office). These cargos are related to the town government and economics, and are the main sphere where changes discussed in this chapter take place.

796 782 The people participate in ceremonials as members of the group (town, trade, etc.) which is having the celebration. Personal participation also is determined by a personal life crisis. A person in need of help will ask a given saint for recovery from sickness, or success in travel or any other enterprise. He will invoke the saint when in danger in an accident or will beg for offspring or for finding a lost animal. A vow (Spanish, *manda*) is usually made in exchange for the saint's giving the supernatural help demanded. This vow is often a promise to sponsor a festival or participate in it as a dancer. Even if the vow is of a different nature, attendance at the saint's festival is generally the rule. The devotee will usually go in pilgrimage to the saint's shrine. Often an ex-voto is taken which records the miracle performed by the saint; these are little figures of silver, usually representing the part of the body healed (Spanish, *milagro,* miracle); or, (although this is more common among the mestizos [532] than among the Tarascans) a picture is made to depict the miracle and an explanation written *(retablo).* Votive offerings are kept by the image as proof of its miraculousness. Another common vow is to take an ornament for the image, usually clothes. Thus, personal drive toward religion resolves into sponsorship or attendance at a festival.

796 Folk religious festivals *(fiestas)* and related activities of the cult form the main part of Tarascan folk religion. The description of these festivals and their organization take most of the space devoted to religion in the published community studies.[2]

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[2] For example, Beals, 1946, 36 out of 47 pp.; in Foster, 1948, 25 out of 25.

796 Festivals of the different saints and virgins are celebrated at the dates fixed by the Catholic calendar. Most important are the celebrations of events regarding the life of Jesus: Christmas, Lent, Holy Week, and Corpus Christi are the occasions for the main cult activities. Only the patron of each town and the cult of the Virgin attain similar importance. In all fiestas, mass is said as Catholic ritual prescribes, and other traits of ritual demanded by the Church are also performed.

796 536 The most important folk additions to the Catholic liturgy are dramatizations and dances somehow related to the festival which is being celebrated. The Passion of Christ is the best example. Certain of the villagers dress as Jews, apostles and other characters of the story, and participate in its representation, which takes place in church under the direction of the priest. Some also police the village so that everybody will keep the precept of not working. In some villages a full stage production is performed. The celebration of Holy Week is most renowned in Tzintzuntzan.[3]

796 535 In Holy Week there are no dances. In other fiestas, music and dancing are the most important aspect of the performance accompanying church rituals, and outweigh the spoken play (Spanish, *relato* or *coloquio*).

In Corpus Christi and its Octave, the farmers take their oxen to the churchyard and pretend to plow while the other crafts represented in the village also display their work and make little samples which they later throw to the crowd. A mock market and a greased pole also make this festival an attractive entertainment. Dances of the Conquest and of the Negroes, and a Maypole dance (Spanish *tejedores*, weavers) have been reported for this occasion but seem to be obsolete now.[4]

The most important dances are performed during the Christmas-Epiphany season and on the patron saint's day. The dance performed in most towns on the day of the patron saint is that known as *moros y soldados* (Moors and soldiers) or by slightly different words. It represents the Moors' defeat by the soldiers and their conversion.[5] In some places this dance is also performed on the Day of the Cross (May 3rd).[6]

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[3] Foster, 1948, 210-214.

[4] León, 1906, 462-4; Beals, 1946, 125-37; Foster, 1948, 216-18.

[5] León, 1906, 431 *ff*; Beals, 1946, 131, 144, 156.

[6] For Angahuan, see Beals, 1946, 143; for eighteenth century Tangamandapio and Jacona, see Estado, 1944, 470, 477; León, 1906, 431.

796 536 535 The plays and dances performed during Christmas and Epiphany represent people who comment on the birth of the Holy Child and come to worship him and to bring him presents. The usual name for these dances is *pastorela* (pastoral) and the main characters are shepherds. Sometimes other characters are added, often wearing masks, such as old men, savages *(apaches)*, Negroes, ranchers, the Three Kings, hermits, angels, and devils. In some places the *pastorela* includes a number of these characters, while in others some of them perform in the pastorela and the others form special dances.

In Cherán, for instance, there is a dance of Negroes, performed on December 25th, another called *melebris* which includes Negroes, old men and savages (December 14-24), a pastorela of shepherdesses (December 24-6), and a dance of old men including the Three Kings (January 6).[7] The only complete pastorela which has been published (unfortunately only in Tarascan) comes from Pichátaro, 1883.[8] It had shepherds, a ranch boy and girl, hermit, angels, and three devils (Luzbel, Sin, and Cunning). The first part, performed by the devils, is followed by the presentation of gifts brought by the other characters to the Holy Child. The pastorela from Capacuaro looks similar for it has first a stage play by devils, followed by a dance with a play by ranchers, shepherds, angels, Europeans, and hermits who act as buffoons.[9] In another published text (from Quinceo, 1912), the characters are old men who not only bring presents to the Holy Child but also discuss other aspects of the Faith.[10] Other villages have slightly different Christmas dances or pastorelas, all with different combinations of the same basic characters.[11]

796 535 A dance can become an element of ceremony in itself. Taking a dance group to a saint can be an individual vow. In famous fiestas which draw pilgrims from many villages, dancers come to perform for that saint although the festival celebrated may have nothing to do with the original meaning of the dance. For instance, *Santiagos* (Saint James dance) from Pátzcuaro, *Pastorela* from Zipiajo and the Old Men's dance from Cucuchucho (both Christmas dances) come to Tzintzuntzan to dance for the *Señor del Resgate* (an Ecce Homo).[12]

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[7] Beals, 1946, 144-154.
[8] León, 1906, 433-52.
[9] Beals, 194, 154-5.
[10] León and Contreras, 1944.
[11] Beals, 1946, 144, 155, 210; León, 1906, 435; Foster, 1948, 204.
[12] Foster, 1948, 208.

796 535 Different towns have reputations for giving dances in which they excel, and these are taken to other places. Lately, through secularization, dances are performed on non-religious occasions: for instance, the Moors and Christians from Ihuatzio and the Old Men from Cucuchucho performed in Tzintzuntzan to commemorate the establishment of the municipio.[13]

796 The organization of the festivals adds further elaboration for the ceremonials. In the case of sponsorships *(mayordomias)* in which the image of the saint is kept in the house of the sponsor *(mayordomo)* the moving of the image from house to house or to the church is also an occasion for celebration. The cargueros usually prepare a banquet for other officials, civil or religious, and for the participants in the dances. These obligations are met with some help from relatives and are occasions for exchange of property. Music is played and the dances are performed in courtyards of the houses of cargueros and dancers. The change of cargueros, including petitioning for office and changing officials, further adds to the celebration.[14]

178 796 These affairs are presently in an advanced stage of secularization. Their social and entertainment value is often greater than the religious. Dances are popular as amusements, perhaps more than anything else, the mythical meaning being in many cases obscure. [541] Major festivals have many other entertainments such as fireworks *(castillo)* or bull riding *(jaripeo)*.

796 517 Also very important is the connection with trade. On great festivals a market is held and people come in pilgrimage, combining their duties with trade transactions. The meeting of people for religious celebrations and market brings further entertainment as occasions to meet friends and relatives and to get drunk. And for the young people it is an occasion to meet and for courtship. Every town has a major fiesta, usually although not always that of the patron saint, which draws people from many villages.[15]

THE TRADITIONAL ORGANIZATION OF THE CULT

794 621 The organization of the cult among Mexican Indians has always been closely connected with the political and social organization of the communities.

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[13] Foster, 1948, 198.
[14] For instance Beals, 1946, 123-4.
[15] A list of each town's main festival is given in Juchari anápu, 1948.

621 175 The particular form which the Indian communities took among the Tarascans may have been influenced by Vasco de Quiroga, Bishop of Michoacan from 1538 to 1565, who seems to have followed in part the ideas of Thomas More's *Utopia*.[16] [743] He tried to organize every Indian town around a so-called *hospital*. These were not only to take care of the sick but to organize the whole economic, social and religious life of the community. In Quiroga's ordinances, hospital is really the same thing as Indian community. [423] Members of the hospital held all land in common. Every member was assigned a plot for his own use and also worked in the communal lands, the produce equally distributed among the commoners or devoted to the support of the needy (widows, orphans, the sick and incapacitated). Surplus produce was sold and the amount thus earned kept in a box under the care of three officers of the hospital who rendered an account every year. The heads of families democratically elected the officers of the hospital. [794] Every hospital had as its patron the Virgin of the Conception, and a sodality *(cofradía)* with funds of its own attended to her cult. Many other religious activities were also organized by the hospital. [438] Bishop Quiroga has also been credited with the introduction of new handicrafts in different towns, each specializing in a different activity.[17] The extent to which Bishop Quiroga succeeded in putting his ordinances into practice and the outcome of the hospitales deserve careful investigation.

Quiroga was not the only one to establish hospitales in Indian towns. Both Franciscan and Augustinian Friars founded a number of them, although Michoacan was the region of New Spain where they were of greater extent and importance. The first hospitales in Michoacan have been attributed to a Franciscan, Juan de San Miguel, and the primacy of Quiroga has been disputed.[18] The greater functions of the hospitales in organizing the whole life of the village seem to be peculiar to Quiroga's plans and this is the subject which requires more investigation. The basic traits of Quiroga's hospitales, however, are the same as those of other Indian villages in the rest of colonial Mexico: communal ownership of land; town specialization in trades; more or less democratic organization of the town government and cult; and

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[16] Zavala, 1937.
[17] Zavala, 1937; León, 1906, 261-2, who quotes Moreno, a biographer of Quiroga.
[18] Ricard, 1933, 189-194.

175 621 the close interrelation of civil and religious offices. These basic traits are well documented for Michoacan. The economic aspects have been mentioned previously. The political-religious organization will presently be examined and the organization of the hospitales as they actually functioned will be sketched on the basis of eighteenth century reports,[19] but also using survivals into modern times.

175 476 Besides the hospital proper to take care of the sick, there seems to have been a building called the *guatapera* (Spanish from Tarascan) where the communal work, mainly cooking, was done to attend to the various needs of the establishment, and a chapel of the Virgin of the Conception, patroness of the hospital.

175 794 The cult of the Virgin and other religious activities were the most important functions of the hospital. From this is derived the Tarascan name for hospital, *iuɹiso* (Virgin's chapel). As Quiroga provided, a sodality *(cofradía)* attended to her cult.

175 794 575 Cofradías are societies of the faithful devoted, organized to attend to some aspect of cult or charity. They formed an important part of the cult organization in Spain and were introduced into Spanish America. In one form or another they have left an imprint on modern Indian-Spanish cultures.

175 794 575 621 743 This sodality of the Virgin was the dominant element of the hospital in the eighteenth century, and all others were subordinate to it. Reports from that period more often called the whole organization 'cofradía of the Virgin' than hospital. It can be said that at that time hospital was not that all-embracing institution Quiroga had planned, but rather a sodality for the cult of the Virgin which also took care of the sick and had other secondary activities.

An important characteristic of the hospital in Michoacan was its all-inclusive nature. The cofradía was not a restricted group of people within the community, as was the case in Spanish and a few Indian settlements, but the whole Indian village formed the brotherhood. Thus, it was really the main, although not the only, village organization to provide for religious activities.

The function of the hospital was to finance and organize the cult of the Virgin, although it also participated in other celebrations. For this purpose it depended on cofradía property, individual contributions from members at large and officials in particular. The officials took care of the com-

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[19] See discussion of sources in the Introduction.

794 mon property of the cofradía, collected contributions and made their own donations.
575 Thus they financed and organized the main
621 religious festivals of the community and attended to the upkeep of the priest and
743 his household. The function of taking care of the sick, which can be supposed to have
175 given the name to *hospital*, was still met in some villages but not mentioned in others, and seems to have been of relatively lesser importance. More important was attending to the proper burial of the dead and holding mass for their souls.

The hospital had a number of yearly
175 elected officers. The *prioste* was the head
624 authority. He took care of the festivals of the Virgin and prayed for the masses for
743 the dead. Under him was the *mayordomo del hospital*, or in Tarascan, *kéŋi*. He shared with the prioste the charge of the festivals of the Virgin and as head of the *semaneros* took care of the material side of the organization. The semaneros, or weekly officers, were Indians from every section of the village who attended the hospital by turns weekly and attended to preparing food and taking care of the sick.

175 To care for the Virgin there were a num-
778 ber of female officers, sometimes young girls, other times older women; they were
624 most commonly called *roseras* (Spanish) or *huananches* (Spanish from Tarascan), although other names were used depending on their specific duties. They took care of the image and altar of the Virgin, carried the image and banners in processions, and provided flowers, candles and incense.

These officers were found in most villages
175 for which there is information.[30] Many differences in detail existed from town to
624 town, mainly in the particular festival
796 each one of these officers sponsored and in the nature of the contributions to any given festival. The officers attended to the festivals of the Virgin such as Conception, Asumption, and Candlemas, and also to weekly Saturday services followed by a procession of the image through the courtyard. They also intervened in the organization and financing of other festivals, mainly Holy Week and Christmas. The hospital officers were the main contributors for the support of the priest, and they were also in charge of collecting and taking the contributions from the rest of the village to the priest.

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[30] Modern data from Cherán (Beals, 1946, 123), Pichátaro (León, 1906, 425), and Jarácuaro (field notes), show another officer called colector as the main authority, superior to the prioste. He is not mentioned in older reports.

175 794 575 624 Besides the cargueros of the hospital there were other religious officers. Sodalities other than those of the hospitales with funds for the cult were rare, and existed only in very few towns. But as a rule there were also other sponsors of festivals to saints not connected with the hospital. Common to all villages were several sponsors (*capitanes*, *fiesteros*, or other names) who organized the festival to the patron saint, and danced as Moors and Christians.

Other cargueros also sponsored the cult of different saints, every village having different devotions. Minor offices were those of sexton (*fiscal*, Spanish) and a *petájpi* (Tarascan) who was second to him. Also many villages gave personal service to the priest for the upkeep of his household, so that different villagers acted as doorkeeper, groom or errand boy, and some of the women cleaned house and cooked.

175 794 651 Financing the cult involved payment of alms, fees to the Church, and the upkeep of the priest and the cult (wax, ornaments, wafers and wine, etc.) and also the expenses involved in folk ceremonial elements such as the dancers' costumes, banqueting, and other entertainments like fireworks and bull fighting. Church fees were fixed by the Bishop and were called *arancel* (book of rates). They were primarily for mass and the administration of the sacraments. In Michoacan every village had an arancel of its own called *pindecuario* (local Spanish, from Tarascan *pindékua*, custom); besides those fees, the contributions for the support of the priest were mentioned. These were often in kind and were periodical, frequently coinciding with the main festivals. As long as the union of Church and State lasted, these aranceles had also the approval of the civil authorities.

Financing was obtained from three main sources: the communal property of the hospital (and other cofradías if any), whose produce was destined to finance religion; individual contributions and alms from all the villagers; and personal contributions from the cargueros.

175 743 423 575 794 In the eighteenth century, many of the hospitales had property devoted to the support of their activities. Most generally this was in the form of cattle pastured on the village commons. One of the cargueros or a cowboy was in charge of these cattle and received the milk as a personal reward. In other cases, land was also owned by the hospital and worked in common, or more often rented. In one case the hospital

175 owned a sugar press and a flour mill.[21]
When the village's hospital had good prop-
743 erty, this financed not only the cult and
423 fiesta expenses but also other duties of the
hospital officers, such as caring for the sick
575 and paying for masses of the dead. In addi-
tion, the cargueros could use this same
794 source of income to provide food for the
villagers at some of the festivals.[22] One
village had a cofradía in order to pay the
pindecuario and another one to pay for the
sick and for burials.[23] Some towns had
more than one cofradía or *hermandad*[24] be-
sides that of the Conception of the hospital.

In villages with rich property and in which other expenses were met by small contributions from all, cult upkeep was not a financial burden.[25] However, where the cofradías had no property or not enough to meet expenses, upkeep of the cult by heavy personal contributions placed a financial burden on the villagers. In Amatlan, Indian poverty was attributed to heavy services for the priest, in spite of the fact that there were two cofradías with their own property. In Tancítaro the hospital had lost property and the Indians paid from their personal resources, causing the decline of the hospital although it was once very prosperous.[26] In the region north of the Sierra where haciendas were already important and the Indian speech was beginning to recede,[27] the cofradías of the hospital owned no property *(fondos)* from which they could meet their expenses.[28]

175 The financial obligations of the cargos
796 were specially onerous and sometimes led
the carguero to peonage. In *Tangancícuaro*,
735 the prioste became "almost a slave, hiring
himself out as a muleteer servant [sirvi-
794 ente de recua]",[29] in Guarachita "very im-
poverished and sometimes almost like a
slave in a hacienda".[30] In Jiquilpan, the
mayordomos of different saints bound
(cautivan) themselves for a long time in
order to retrieve what they had spent.[31] On
the other hand, in Tangamandapio and
Taripo, a number of fiestas were no longer
held because of the poverty of the people.[32]

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[21] Tacámbaro (Osbourn Ms.).
[22] Huetamo, Cutzeo (Osbourn Ms.).
[23] Amatlan (Osbourn Ms.).
[24] Apatzingán, Tacámbaro, La Guacana, Churumuco (Osbourn Ms.).
[25] For instance Huetamo, Cutzeo (Osbourn Ms.).
[26] Osbourn Ms.
[27] Some towns in this area, like Sahuayo and Guarachita, were of Nahuatl speech but their culture seems to have been similar to that of neighboring Tarascan speaking villages.
[28] Estado, 1944, passim.
[29] Ibid., 478.
[30] Ibid., 480.
[31] Osbourn Ms.
[32] Estado, 1944, 477, 478.

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735 The effect of excessive cult expenses on Indian poverty was strong enough to lead
794 the subdelegate (Spanish district authority) to give instructions against it. He recommended avoiding those banquets and superfluities based on the pretext of church festivals. In the case of Amatlan, he directed that no personal service should be given the priest other than that of sexton and bellman.[33]

624 The civil administration conformed to general practice in colonial Mexico. Every Indian town was headed by a *gobernador*. There were also one or more *alcaldes* (mayors) and a number of *regidores* (councilmen), according to the size of the town. Minor officials seem to have been more variable: *alguaciles*, similar officers called *katápi* in Tarascan, errand boys *(topil)*, and a scribe.

624 An important characteristic of this civil organization was its close connection with
794 the cult organization. For as long as the union of State and Church lasted (until the middle of the nineteenth century), the obligations of the village toward the priest and the cult had the sanction of the civil authorities who approved the church fees *(aranceles)*. The higher civil authorities also intervened in the regulation of cult activities.[34] The village civil officers had also some religious obligations in sponsoring certain festivals or in contributing to the support of the priest.[35]

The custom of making a religious office prerequisite for a civil one or for attaining the status of elder (Spanish, *principal;* Tarascan, *t'aɹépiti*) seems also to have been present. Evidence for the eighteenth century is lacking. Only for the village of Cutzeo we know that the principales were those who had passed through the office of governor, and that *atole* (cornmeal) for their Saturday meetings was made by the semaneros in the hospital. Today, however, traits of the surviving religious organization suggest the former existence of this connection between civil and religious officers. The group of elders is called *cabildo*, which originally meant 'town council', although it can also mean sodality council. In Cherán, principales are those who have passed through the offices of prioste and colector. In Angahuan also, religious offices have to be held before one becomes alcalde or member of the cabildo.[36]

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[33] Osbourn Ms.

[34] Osbourn Ms.; Estado, 1944, passim.

[35] The governor in Ario, Tacámbaro (Osbourn Ms.), Coeneo (Rivera, 1888, 332, 334), San Francisco (Ocampo, 1900, 297); the councilmen in Tancítaro (Osbourn Ms.).

[36] Beals, 1946, 132, 143.

624 794 More detailed information comes from Chilchota. Here a man was first mayordomo of the hospital, then mayordomo of the patron saint, later mayordomo of his barrio's saint, and then *vaquero* (another religious office) in order to become councilman *(regidor)*. Thereafter he was one of the elders.[37] Data from Pichátaro also seem to indicate religious office as prerequisite for eldership, but the facts are not clear.[38]

To judge from modern survivals, nomination of the new officers was made by the acting officers together with the elders. It was customary to ask for a cargo because of a religious vow or the desire to advance in the social scale. The elders could in addition ask any man to join in their duties.[39] Petitioning for office seems to have been accompanied by taking presents to the elders or councilmen, in typical Indian fashion.

DECLINE OF THE TRADITIONAL ORGANIZATION: ANTICLERICALISM AND CATHOLIC REACTION

175 794 735 At the end of the eighteenth century, then, the heavy cult expenses were causing the impoverishment of the Indians in those villages, which, through work in the haciendas, were more related to the national economy and which had no communal property, or not enough, devoted to the upkeep of the cult. In their turn the impoverished villages had to reduce the number of festivals because they were unable to meet expenses, and the authorities tried to suppress excessive expenses in some festivals and personal services to the priests.

175 794 423 For the nineteenth century there is no survey of the Tarascan area comparable to that for the end of the eighteenth. Only for the turn of the century is information again available. Since this is the period of further growth of the haciendas and loss of village communal property — factors which already were causing instability in the cult organization and the end of the colonial period — we can safely assume that the same trend continued during the nineteenth century. Looking into the modern situation we see that the communal property devoted to support of the cult is practically nonexistant. Only some cattle are still devoted to Saint Ines in Cherán. In Chilchota, keeping cattle for the Virgin is still remembered[40] and pro-

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[37] *Ibid.*, 215.
[38] León, 1906, 427.
[39] Beals, 1946, 132 (for Cherán); 216 (for Chilchota).
[40] *Ibid.*, 216, 129.

175 794 423 duce from the tule grounds in Jarácuaro was used until a short time ago to buy wax for the church.

Financing the cult is now effected almost exclusively by individual contributions from cargueros or the townspeople at large. 794 735 Indian impoverishment caused by attending to religious festivals is reported again by Lumholtz for Cherán at the turn of the century.[41] Since villagers were able, because of the individualization of landownership, to sell or pawn their lands to outsiders, the possibility of the cult expenses' hastening the loss of Indian properties undoubtedly increased. This is alive in the memory of many people today, for example in La Cañada, Urapicho, Uricho, and Arocutin.

624 The period of Mexican Independence up to the present time has produced a number of changes in the organization of local government. These changes cannot be followed in detail, for no study is available on local government in Mexico.

Today, the office of governor has disappeared without leaving any trace in modern organization. *Regidores* is today another name for the *munícipes* (councilmen)[42] but no data are available as to whether they are a continuation from the colonial officers. Alcaldes were in existence at least until the end of the nineteenth century.[43] During the Porfirio Díaz period, government policy gave almost all direct control to the head (*jefe político*) of each district. After the Revolution a turn was taken toward the free township (*municipio libre*), and local governments secured more autonomy. Every municipio in Michoacan is now governed by elected councilmen, one of whom acts as municipal president and another as an executive (*síndico*). A judge and his alternate are also elected. There are in addition an appointed secretary, a treasurer, and policemen.

As each municipio includes a number of villages, the above officers are found only in the head town of each, although they may come from one of the dependent villages. Most villages being dependent (*tenencias*) have only a chief (*jefe*) with his alternate and a judge. Any survival from the old organization is not part of the official government but only of the folk organization of the cult.

The names of some of the religious of-

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[41] Lumholtz, 1902, 2:398.
[42] Beals, 1946, 105; Foster, 1948, 178.
[43] Constituciones, 1902, 404, 414-415; Lumholtz, 1902, 2:391.

624 ficers (*regidor* in Chilchota, *alcalde* and *regidor* in Angahuan)[44] indicate that they were civil authorities, but the duties of those officers are today purely religious. It seems that with changes in local administration the old civil offices, instead of disappearing, were kept because of their religious obligations and became members of the unofficial group of cargueros organizing the cult.

794 175 The nineteenth century in Mexico has seen conflict between the Church and the State. This undoubtedly influenced the local cult organization. Unfortunately, not enough material is available and further investigation is necessary. Before the separation of Church and State, the Government, whose approval of the Bishop's *aranceles* was necessary, tried to reduce the church fees and to suppress other kinds of tribute which the Indian had to pay to the priest. Two of the *pindecuarios* (Coeneo and San Francisco) have been published by radical authors of attacks against the Church.[45] The different aranceles in effect in Michoacan have been mentioned by León.[46] By the law of April 1857, the fees were suppressed for the poor, and personal services for the priest, together with all other special contributions, were abolished.[47]

Shortly thereafter, the separation of Church and State took place. It is supposed that this also helped the separation of religious and civil functions in the villages, but no direct data are available on the effect of national policies on the local organization of Indian communities in Michoacan.

621 In spite of these changes, which occurred during the nineteenth century, the organization of conservative Tarascan towns is still very similar to the old. The following short outline will point out the main changes and will provide a basis on which to describe modern trends of change.

The close union of Church and State in colonial Mexico corresponded in the local culture to the organization of the hospital offices and council of elders, which connected the civil government and the church organization. As a result of the separation of Church and State, and the new civil administration, the political and religious organization of Tarascan villages consists, on the one side, of the new civil

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[44] Beals, 1946, 215, 216, 143.
[45] Ocampo, 1900; Rivera, 1888.
[46] León, 1906, 434 ff.
[47] Pérez, 1936, 191-2.

621 officers mentioned above, whose religious duties are few, and on the other, of the priest and his aides.

The traditional organization based on the 624 hospitales survives with the same officers as of old, under the name of *cabildo*, but 794 it has lost many of its connections with the civil government and the priest. It is a group of cargueros, officers who organize certain festivals entirely through their own resources, help the priest in the maintenance of his household and the church, and name the next cargueros. The importance of this cabildo in the village is variable. In some places it is still the main religious body, as in Angahuan,[48] while in others it has receded and almost disappeared, as in Tzintzuntan, where it is called *cargueros de la kenguería.*[49] Cherán represents an intermediate stage, with the cabildo losing much of its former importance. The attitude of the local priest in relying on local customs or doing without them in the organization of his household and church is an important factor in determining the importance of the cabildo (or of similar cargueros) at any given moment.

There are other groups (*mayordomías*) sponsoring the cult of various saints; they are independent of each other and of the town government. The expenses are met individually by each mayordomo, who is replaced when an individual asks for his position (usually to fulfil a vow) either of the priest or of the outgoing mayordomo or owners of the saint. The civil authorities also intervene in the organization of the church aspects of some festivals and they name commissioners to organize them.

The local priest takes care of the litur- 793 gical celebrations. For their organization and church upkeep he can rely on the tra- 794 ditional cabildo or he can name commissioners when the occasion requires it. Also under his direction are a number of religious societies whose members engage primarily in acts of devotion and have few obligations as to the festivals or their expenses. The priest can also give the mayordomía of a saint belonging to the church.[50]

Communal property for the cult of the 794 saints is practically non-existent. The financing and organization can be done either by the individual sponsor (carguero) who assumes all obligations personally or

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[48] Beals, 1946, 143.
[49] Foster, 1949, 201-2.
[50] Beals, 1946, 119; Foster, 1948, 202-204.

794 by commissioners (*comisionado, encargado*) named by the priest or the town council for a given task. In this case the time required is less and also the contributions, the expenses being met by the town or ward (barrio) and the commissioner acting as collector.

794 668 798 Changes in recent years have been, on the one hand, the rise of an anticlerical movement among the agraristas, aiming at suppressing the cult. On the other hand, in the conservative communities trying to preserve the cult, changes can be described in terms of the decline of the cabildo, increased intervention by the priest or town council, and the change from individual sponsor to commissioner.

* * *

The accumulation of causes giving rise to a movement against the organization of the cult and the cargos had thus been going on for a long period of time when the Mexican agrarian revolution began to be influential in Michoacan. The local participation of Tarascan villages in the movements for agrarian reform has been outlined in the previous chapter. The local agraristas became supporters of the national revolutionary governments from which they expected to receive lands. Both the national and the local situations also combined to produce an anticlerical policy on the part of the agraristas.

Social studies in Michoacan have been limited to peasant communities, and no good study is available on the haciendas and the cities. Consequently there is no good information as to the way in which the anticlerical policy of the government was evident in Michoacan. In Mexico at large the official Church has been connected with the traditional landowner class, which explains the anticlerical policies of the government. In Michoacan we can assume the same situation prevailed, for we know that the church here, too, opposed the government's agrarian reforms.[51] Anticlericalism appears on the one hand as the influence of governmental policies. On the other hand, the local situation is of paramount importance and only in those places where local conditions provided a basis for it has anticlericalism gained any stronghold.

[735] Financing the traditional cult had been the cause in many villages for Indian impoverishment and the loss of land to a few rich or to outsiders. This fact led the

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[51] Foster, 1948, 175.

668 794 798 agrarista groups to identify the cult and the festivals with the land order against which they were revolting. Thus the local situation tied itself up with the national anticlerical policy of the government.

The agraristas kept the priest out of town and closed the church. If it had been burned during the Revolution they did not rebuild it,[52] or they used the church and the priest's house for other functions such as social centers or schools.[53] Cargos and fiestas were forbidden as they were seen to be the causes of excessive expenditures and drunkenness.[54]

[565] We have already presented the causes for the failure of the agraristas to maintain their power in villages where small landowners prevailed. The agraristas became an exclusive privileged minority, opposed to the interest of most of the villagers. Their anticlerical policies also led them to reforms in an aspect of culture—religion and festivals—which were deeply ingrained in the traditional culture. Resistance to their economic policies thus became associated with resistance to culture change. In such conservative villages, reaction against the agraristas was always prevalent,[55] and it had a militant Catholic ideology. Even during the period of the most strongly antichurch policy of the government, some villagers managed to hide a priest,[56] and others, like Cherán, smuggled one in to say mass in private houses without the anticlerical minority's being strong enough to dare speak.[57]

791 Still in other more conservative villages the lack of a priest led not to obsolescence of religion, but to manifestations of folk religion which the priests would not have allowed. In Ocumicho, a woman called María Doncella (Mary the Maiden) claimed to have heard the voice of God in a slit stone in a ravine near the village. The news spread throughout the region and many people began to come to Ocumicho in pilgrimage. María Doncella baptized the children herself and songs were made to her in which she was called the daughter of God. Once she said that the Virgin of Cocucho had come to Ocumicho and taken the patron San Pedro with her, and she organized a procession of people to go to Cocucho and pray to have San Pedro come back. According to skeptical informants

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[52] Urapicho: Beals, 1946, 131.
[53] Tzurumútaro, Puácuaro.
[54] Sáenz, 1936, 96; Simpson, 1937, 467.
[55] Sáenz, 1936, passim; Foster, 1948, 175.
[56] Tzintzuntzan: Foster, 1948, 175, 224.
[57] Beals, 1946, 110.

791 from Cocucho, her reputation and activities evaporated when in spite of her name she became pregnant.

Also, during this time of the govern-
668 ment's limitation of priests, groups of
794 *cristeros*, in revolt against the government, operated in Michoacan.[58]

178 From about 1940, the agraristas lost control of many villages. They were able to stay in power only where they had been the majority. No study has been made of towns where the agraristas predominated. The communities studied are conservative and the agraristas were a minority. The study of Cherán[59] was made shortly after the agrarista group had been expelled. The author's field work was concentrated in a village where the anti-agrarista reaction was in power and had become affiliated with sinarquismo.

In describing the present economic situation we mentioned how the economic decline of the Indian communities is continuing in modern times. Since this economic decline was the cause for conflict in the sphere of the cult, the question naturally arises about the policy of this strongly religious reaction in regard to the old cargo system.

Following the success of the anti-agrarista reaction, the cult has again been allowed in villages where it had been forbidden, and fiestas are celebrated again, but there is no blooming again of the traditional cabildo; the decay of the old cargo system continues. Within the Catholic reaction to the agraristas we can see differences arising between more traditional and more modern elements; these differences are manifest in connection with religion and cargos.

Through the changes taking place in the political-religious organization, the cabildo became independent of the village civil administration, and, although connected with the priest, it arranged the festivals and the concession of sponsorships independently. As the organizer of the folk cult activities, it can be taken as the organization most purely representing the folk aspects of the local culture. It is in a position to resist national inroads on the folk culture either from the priest, who wants to change the festivals, or from the government, which wants to suppress the religious cult. As long as the elders have any political power within the community,

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[58] Foster, 1948, 175.
[59] Beals, 1946.

668 the cabildo is neither official nor related to the national or state government.

178 Correspondingly, there are people — we shall call them traditionalists — for whom 794 religion means fundamentally the festivals to the saints, organized by the cargueros and the cabildo, and their meetings, inaugurations, and ceremonies. They speak of the need to continue the cargos and the fiestas and to resume the meetings of the cabildo. They even oppose the priests who attempt to suppress cargos or to modify the festivals, and they look down upon fellow villagers who do not care to take cargos, considering them unfit for leadership within the community.

These folk values are under attack by individuals who, although religious, are drifting away from the traditional organization and becoming closer to the Church. These may be called militant Catholics.

The trend is primarily against the cabildo as a clique of those who, through wealth and age, have passed through the cargos and reached eldership, and try to control cult organization. Also, the individual sponsorship as practiced by the cabildo included heavy expenses in connection with presents and banqueting for cabildo members. The trend is toward less drunkenness and toward making sponsorship less expensive.

The changes in organization cause the cult to be more strictly dependent on either the Church or the town government, *i. e.,* on local branches of national institutions as against the former almost purely locally organized cabildo.

Thus to some extent the conflict appears as one between the priest and the conservative cabildo. The priest, of course, tries to lead the natives into more orthodox practices so that he attempts to suppress some of the folk customs and excessive drunkenness. The basic point is that he is only the incentive and leading force for those town elements who want the changes themselves.

The initiative often comes from the townspeople, from those whom we called militant Catholics. In Cherán some of the people organized a town meeting to ask that the cabildo be suppressed because of the excessive gifts they demanded from those aspiring to sponsorship, because their festivals and meetings were occasions for drunkenness, and because they stole from the church (a discussion having arisen as to the use the cabildo made of

668 178 794 the presents given for church support during the years when priests were lacking). They wanted the cargos to be requested directly from the priest. The outcome was not clear at the time of Beals' study, although the future of the cabildo did not seem very promising, since the priest was opposed to it.[60]

[793] In Jarácuaro, where there was no resident priest at the time of our work, the leading sinarquistas were against becoming cargueros because of the expenses involved and because they did not consider this necessary to be good Catholics. Some old men said they should accept cargos before associating with the elders "because they haven't done anything for the village." The fact was, however, that their help and advice were always requested by the local authorities.

Comparing more conservative communities such as Angahuan or the pre-revolutionary Chilchota[61] with Cherán, it is seen that the cabildo gradually loses its rôle as the main organizer of the folk religion and, although surviving, becomes only one mayordomía or group of mayordomías similar to the others. Participation in the cabildo mayordomía as the prerequisite for eldership disappears, as does the elders' rôle of granting sponsorships. Its importance as organizer of the priest's household and caretaker of the church building depends on how much a given priest relies on them.[62] The trend seems to be toward a situation similar to that in Tzintzuntzan, where the old hospital organization has already disappeared.[63]

[656] In some cases the new civil authorities intervene in the organization of festivals. On the one hand, this could be taken as a reunion of Church and State in the local sphere, for the new civil authorities assume religious functions. The feeling still prevails that every man should take a cargo and do something for the town before becoming an officer, and this is being transferred to a new system of local government. To the extent that the folk culture survives, this trend might be expected to continue. The new authorities work in close connection with the priest and mayordomías for a new organization more suited to the changing environment and economic situation than is the old-fashioned cabildo.

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[60] *Ibid.*, 134 *ff.*
[61] *Ibid.*, 143-44, 215-19.
[62] *Ibid.*, 118.
[63] Foster, 1948, 201-202.

668 178 794 On the other hand, the intervention of the civil authorities reflects increasing secularization of the main festivals. It takes place in those festivals wherein the non-church celebration is of more importance and of more entertainment and commercial value. The most typical folk festivals, such as the patron saint's fiesta and Corpus Christi, are organized by the town officials as a secular affair aside from the day's religious celebration.[64]

178 794 The trend of change is not only to shift control from the cabildo to either the priest or the town government. A change in the way of organizing a given festival is also involved. This is done by recourse to another method used of old but only lately gaining strength. Instead of individual sponsorship in which the sponsor takes care of all or most of the expense, joint financing by the whole community is used; [624] and instead of the carguero sponsor, there is a commissioner, named by the town council or the priest; his contributions are small and he organizes the festival and collects contributions from the villagers. Also, different commissioners are named, to divide the preparation of the festival. This new system is called *comisionado* in Cherán[65] or *encargado* in Tzintzuntzan.[66]

This change has taken place in Tzintzuntzan: the cargueros of La Soledad Church and of the Guadalupe Chapel have been replaced by encargados with fewer duties and less financial responsibility than formerly.[67]

A commissioner system is used today in Cherán for the festival of the patron saint, Corpus Christi, and its Octave,[68] but no information is available as to how the cargueros went out of office. In Huáncito (a Cañada town) the change in organization for the town's saint took place when resuming the festival after the period of agrarista suppression of the cult.

The decline of the cabildo also involves the cessation of its meetings with the banqueting, music, and drunkenness which were an important part of the ceremonies attended by cargueros. The ceremonies attendant to the change of officials, important in the past, also disappear.

This does not mean, however, the end of the carguero system. As long as some people can accumulate property, the folk culture is still sufficiently strong that individ-

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[64] Beals, 1946, 120-127; Foster, 1948, 204*ff*, 215*ff*.
[65] Beals, 1946, 106, 120.
[66] Foster, 1948, 198, 199.
[67] Ibid., 198, 200-201.
[68] Beals, 1946, 120, 126, 127.

794 178 uals can be found to sponsor festivals. The fact remains, though, that the opposite tendency making for decay of the mayordomías seems to be stronger.

794 In spite of the changes devised to preserve the festivals and the desire to continue them, the old fact of their being an economic burden still continues. During the short time when the field work for the Tarascan project was done, a number of fiestas were not celebrated because nobody was available to see to the expenses or because of the current conflict between the cargueros and the priest. Thus in Cherán, 1940, dances for Santa Nieves, the Virgin of Guadalupe, and the pastorela of the shepherdesses were not celebrated.[69] In Tzintzuntzan, the cargueros of La Soledad were not functioning since the priest had suppressed them in 1942.[70] The festival of the patron saint failed in Jaracuaro in 1945 because of lack of enough sponsors.

The new commissioner who substitutes for the old carguero can find his duty too much like that of his predecessor, his contribution being too high. In Cherán in 1940, one of the four commissioners named by the town officials to act as Moro dancers avoided the performance and only three Moros danced.[71]

668 794 178 This new trend away from folk festivals and toward a closer dependence on the priest is, therefore, also one toward both more orthodox Catholicism and secularization of the festivals. It finds more ready support among the villagers who have become associated with sinarquismo, and whose relation to the Church is close and similar to that of allegiance to a political party. Conversely, the priest often supports and fosters the spread of sinarquismo among the townspeople. Not only does he attack the old organization of cargueros and try to have a new one under his control, but he uses their influence to attack the government and schools, and to support the sinarquista schools and propaganda.[72]

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The economic developments of the Indian communities outlined in Chapter 2 have been causing the disruption of folk cult celebrations because of the economic burden of their financing.

In connection with the agraristas, a radical trend for change arises which, spurred by the cult rôle in the impoverishment of

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[69] *Ibid.*, 138, 139, 140.
[70] Foster, 1948, 198.
[71] Beals, 1946, 121.
[72] Foster, 1948, 178, 184-185, 193.

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some villagers and by the anticlerical policy of the government, aims at abolishing the cult. But as in the economic sphere, this movement does not succeed in making change permanent because of the survival of the villages' economic foundation and their folk culture. There is a return to the cult, although the economic situation forces changes in its organization: decline of the body of the folk officers (cabildo); increased control by the priest; abolition of some folk ceremonies; organization of the main festivals by the civil administration as secular affairs; change from organization by an individual sponsor (carguero) carrying all the financial burden, to that of a number of commissioners sharing in the organization and the collection of contributions from the whole community. The decline of folk festivals and the greater control by the priest lead to a more orthodox Catholicism, and the influence of sinarquismo, in which allegiance to the

2:Carrasco E-4, 5 (1945)1952

[P. 35b] NU34 Tarasco NU34

Pátzcuaro

668 Church is of a political nature, brings the
local subculture closer to the national culture.
178 These changes show the trend
through which the folk religion might disappear
794 completely (lack of cult sponsors,
control by the priests, or the success of the
anticlericals), but the simplification of
ceremonials and the new forms of organization
are also a means by which the folk
religion survives, on an organizational
basis better suited to the changed economic
and social order. As in economics,
the basic traits of the village community
survive. A stable situation, however, is
not reached. Conflict continues, because of
the same forces which caused the changes
described: the economic impossibility or
unattractiveness of the festivals, and the
ceremonials under attack by the priest.
These trends go on disrupting the folk culture,
but they are not strong enough to
break it completely. As in economics, a
state of latent conflict continues.

4

RELIGIOUS IDEOLOGY — AND SOCIAL CONFLICT

000 In the preceding chapter, changes in the organization and ceremonials of folk Catholicism have been examined, as affected by economic and social developments within the local and the national cultures. The trends in religious ideas and folklore will presently be discussed as related to those same factors, and particularly to the political conflict whose relation to religion and the cult organization has been described.

771 An important trait of Tarascan folk Catholicism (as of Catholicism in general) is the ethical nature of its ideology, dominated by concepts of good and evil. Non-ethical concepts are relegated to a second plane constituting mere miscellaneous beliefs, or, in so far as they form a system of ideas, are part of wider concepts dominated by an ethical dichotomy.

771 178 In examining the relation of such a religion to social change, we find an interesting problem of how the social values at stake in the economic and social conflict are reflected in religious ideology. What do religious ideas tell about the agraristas, about the cargo system of sponsoring festivals, about the sinarquistas who are militantly Catholic and yet to some extent are in conflict with the traditional cult system? Is conflict between national influences on the folk culture and folk resistance to change reflected in the folklore? What is the attitude of different political groups toward the existing body of religious ideology?

In order to discuss this relation of religious ideology to social change, an outline of religious ideas and beliefs, as dominated by the good and evil concept, will be presented. This outline is based on folk narratives, mainly myths and experiences with the supernatural, which express religious concepts. A discussion of narrative types will be sketched in order to place them in a wider setting.

The social values sanctioned in religious ideology will then be examined. It will be seen that primarily they endorse the values of the traditional folk culture although they are in conflict with influences from the national culture. Also, in the same way as the ideology of folk Catholicism is part of the wider Catholic religion,

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RELIGIOUS IDEOLOGY AND SOCIAL CONFLICT

771 178 it also sanctions the national values of the Church. Political conflict mentioned in folklore seems to reflect almost exclusively the conservative point of view. Religious people can put it to use to point out the wisdom of following their party and to present the opponent as wicked.

The tendencies which are disrupting the folk culture do not create a new body of folklore. Even religious people, like the sinarquistas, allied to the church, keep only that part of the religion which is more orthodox, and neglect that which is purely folk. Here, as with the agraristas, changes in the religious ideology and folklore do not create a new folklore but induce changes in the *function* of the old, leading to obsolescence. The different attitudes of belief will consequently be considered.[1]

Main Traits of Tarascan Religious Ideology

538 In contrast to what is reported for other Mexican folk cultures[2] the Tarascans do not classify their folk narratives into well defined types according to the story's characters or the didactical or recreative use of the tale. All tales are called *uandánękua*, (from *uandáni*, to tell, to speak; in Spanish, *cuento*). Sometimes, at least in Jarácuaro, the Spanish word (pronounced *kuéntu*) is used in Tarascan discourse. Its meaning, however, seems to be synonymous with *uandánękua*. Everything which is told can be called a tale. This does not mean of course that all narratives are of the same type; it means only that Tarascan culture and language do not recognize standard categories of tales. Different types are to some extent recognized in that some are told as true experiences, usually giving concrete place and personal names, while in others the action takes place in unnamed places and among unknown people. Informants are themselves aware of this possible distinction. Sometimes the word *uandánękua* (or *kuéntu*) is

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[1] This chapter is based almost exclusively on the author's field work. A complete field report will contain a full collection of tales. As this is not yet published, references to it are not possible. Most information comes from Jarácuaro, a strongly religious and conservative village, with sinarquismo as the dominant tendency.

[2] M. Redfield, 1935.

538 used in a more restricted sense to mean fictitious tale as opposed to a true event, while in other cases it can mean anything which is told, including real events. There is no provision, however, for classifying narratives other than to state whether a given tale is considered true or false, and on this point not everybody agrees. One can hear about a given tale a comment like "This is true, it really happened", or "This is what people say, but who knows if it is true." These comments can be heard with all types of tales. The word *cuento* can enter these explanations with different meanings. For instance, on being asked to tell a story (cuento), a man would tell of his experiences during the Revolution, or another would tell how he got lost on a dark night. The following statement was added after a wonder story: "This is not a tale *(cuento)*, this is fiction *(farsa)*." Also in similar situations: "This is not true; it is only a tale (*cuento*)." Thus *cuento* or *uandán¢kua* applies to everything told, and can mean both a true or a false tale according to the context.

Yet the folk narratives of the Tarascans can be classified into the following main types: myths, experiences with supernaturals, and wonder stories.

Myths are tales referring to events in the far past when the world had not yet its present shape. The characters are mostly supernatural. There are included tales of the creation of the world, the destruction of the world, and associated events, stories of people living before the advent of Christianity, and the shaping of the world as it is today.

Another very common type of story concerns experiences with the supernaturals. These include experiences with saints, devils, the dead and witches; miracles of saints; cases of men who have seen the Devil or have made a pact with him in order to gain money or knowledge; how people have seen ghosts on a dark night; how a man comes back to life after a serious illness and reports his travel to the underworld; cases of witchcraft; how a sick man was cured of sorcery; how witches take animal form; how a given witch was caught. All these and many more of similar nature are among the stories most often related. All these stories are practically always told giving the names of the places and persons involved. Tales of this sort can be told as current or past events in the town: *e.g.*, cases of

538 witchcraft, how So-and-So got his wealth by making a pact with the Devil, or how X brought a diviner to find out the person responsible for the burning of his house.

When people come back from a trip, they often bring stories of this type. They will come back from market telling how the Devil was seen in X town. The latest miracle of a saint will be told after a pilgrimage. Narratives of this type are really pieces of news relating to the supernaturals.

Myths and experiences with the supernatural, by the very nature of their content, are told as true events or at least as something which some people believe and tell as true happenings. Any attitude of doubt in these stories often indicates doubt of the religious concept behind the story. On the other hand, some tales, which are experiences with supernaturals (mainly stories of saints or of men pledged to the Devil), can be told as fiction, with no concrete names being given, for mere entertainment, and without indicating any lack of religious belief on the part of the teller.

In such cases these tales merge somewhat with wonder stories. These are tales in which action takes place in unspecified times and places and among unnamed people. They are mostly the wonder stories of European tradition. Whereas in the experiences with the supernaturals the action is always in agreement with actual Tarascan culture—in fact they are case histories of some aspect of Tarascan culture—in the wonder stories the cultural content of the tale is sometimes incongruous with actual Tarascan culture. The characters are often kings and princesses, old men who have magical powers, and heroes who use charms which have no correspondence in living Tarascan culture and which appear only in these tales.

These tales are not told as news, as are the experiences with the supernatural, but mainly for entertainment. Most informants consider them fictitious, but this is by no means the only attitude found. Doubt is quite common: "Who knows if this story is true!" In some cases informants think they are true events which took place in some remote past time. Cultural incongruity causes no inconvenience. After all, the towns were known to have been ruled by kings in the olden times; land titles often mention their names. And many people agree that the ancients had

538 greater magical knowledge and were stronger, braver, and cleverer than the modern people.

These are the main types of narratives. Animal stories are another common type, similar to the Æsopian fable. They are considered fictitious and are told for their entertainment value. Usually they are funny and meant to make people laugh. When asked for tales (meaning fiction) many informants think most readily of this kind of story. Other types of tales, such as jokes, sexy stories, etc., are less common and are not used in this work as they do not reflect religious concepts.

Religious ideas are also expressed in
771 what in Spanish are called beliefs (*creencias*): items of lore giving bits of knowl-
538 edge of the supernatural, as, for instance, omens or the wondrous qualities of certain animals. Sometimes these beliefs treat of a special behavior; for example, the rules about what a pregnant woman should or should not do, or the magical procedures to follow in a technological activity. These beliefs are to some people rules which have to be followed. For many people, however, they are just sayings one does not have to care about. They say, "This is just a belief," meaning "Some people say that, but it is not true."

Thus, folk narratives, an expression of
538 the religious ideas of the people, can mean different things to different people. To those to whom a given tale is a true happening, it has a moral meaning and may sanction a certain kind of behavior. The same happening or tale may be to others an example of how superstitious people are. It will have no moral meaning, sanction, or behavior, although it may be told as an entertaining tale or piece of information.

538 The religious ideology expressed through such narratives will now be examined at
779 its face value, while the different attitudes of belief will later be discussed.

* * *

The general concepts of Tarascan folklore and religion are those of Catholicism. The Christian God created the world and the supernaturals, including the Devil and the saints. The fundamental Christian concept of good and evil is also paramount in Tarascan folklore and religion. This opposition of good and evil appears in a number of contrasts. Everything is classified as one or the other: God and the saints, the good supernaturals who inhabit

538 heaven, are opposed to the bad super-
779 naturals, the Devil and the demons in hell;
the right Religion and the Church are set against superstition and lack of religion; good behavior against bad (sin); the idea of the good going to heaven at death against that of the sinful being punished in hell.

Ethical values are apparent in the rea-
577 sons given for the destruction of the world
538 and the creation of the Devil, in the actions
[779] of the saints in rewarding good behavior
and punishing evil, in the acts of the Devil in sponsoring bad behavior, and in the destiny of the dead.

Taking this concept of good and evil as the main theme, we can give an outline of practically the whole, and certainly the most important part, of Tarascan religious ideas. Nonethical concepts are few and of secondary importance. They are mainly miscellaneous beliefs or tales (in which some natural elements are personified), omens, and so on.

Creation stories are not common among
773 the Tarascans. In those collected, the con-
cept of good and evil is apparent. The
538 duality of the supernatural—God and the
577 saints against the Devil—is explained as
the consequence of the bad behavior of one of the sons of God who revolted against his Father and was punished by being made into the Devil. Insubordination and lack of respect for paternal authority are the causes of this punishment.

In several myths about the creation of animals, the good animals are created by God while the bad ones are related to the Devil. Thus, when Jesus and the chil-
dren of the Devil play making mud figures,
[825] those of Jesus become birds while those
of the Devil become "snakes and lizards, and scorpions and all sorts of bad animals". The coyote was a dog which deserted his master, the Devil.

Most important are the myths regarding
773 the destruction of the world. In these we
have a blend of Spanish and Indian ele-
538 ments in which the Indian motives, non-
ethical in origin, are reinterpreted and subordinated to the Catholic concept of Good and Evil. A number of stories give two destructions of the world. A first one by water is identified with the Christian flood, although it keeps also some traits of the Mesoamerican flood myth; and a second by fire embodies Indian traits but is identified with the advent of Christianity and the Spanish conquest. Some ver-

538 sions, however, give only one destruction of the world, equating the flood with the 773 advent of Christianity, or depriving this last event of its catastrophic character.

Flood stories include a typical Mesoamerican tale—that the survivor of the flood was transformed into a dog because he started a fire. Since the cause of the transformation was disobedience to the Christian God, who had forbidden starting a fire without his command, the story thus becomes integrated with the good and evil theme:

> [539] ". . . down came the angel and kicked him once and again and said, 'This is so that you understand. You have not obeyed me.' And the man began to cry like a dog and the angel said, 'You will be a dog and in punishment you will have to take care of the house.' And this is why there are dogs."

Several stories and beliefs deal with the *k'uaŋári*, or giants, the people who lived before the advent of Christianity. The k'uaŋári had very great strength. They built what are now the ruins of pre-Spanish sites, and also are supposed to have built the churches and installed the bells; bells were their most precious treasure. They did not believe in the true religion but worshipped idols and stones:

> [539] "The ancient people killed people when they had a fiesta and made a feast over that body. That was their custom. They also killed an ox and then they ate it. They covered it with flowers and there they made their fiesta. With the fat of the animal they made candles which they lit for their idols."

The kings of the k'uaŋári set the boundaries of the existing towns and placed the border stones. Some of their deeds are still remembered. They named the towns, they left their imprints on a number of stones, and made war on neighboring kings. The point stressed in the stories is the destruction of these beings because of their lack of religion: they were "unbaptized humans" or "big devils". In order to put an end to this state of affairs, God decided to bless the world. This event is described in some tales as a destruction by fire, in others by water, in the latter case being identified either with the flood or with the formation of Lake Pátzcuaro.

The stories in which the giants are alive before the flood attribute the destruction of the world to their heathenness:

> 773 539 "*T'aɹésʌča* are the idols worshipped by ancestors, those who lived before the flood. They had no images [saints]; the t'aɹésʌča were their saints. When God decided to end the world he told Adam and Eve . . . he believed but the others didn't . . ." [At this point in the story the flood occurs.]

Another short statement says:

> ". . . With the flood the k'uaŋári were extinguished. Don Antonio Siuangua [Jarácuaro's king] was a k'uaŋári. They didn't believe in religion [i.e., Catholicism]; that's why there was the flood. They danced naked and they had no fear of God. I think it was something like those sexy dances they say they have in Morelia or Mexico City where people dance stark naked."

In other stories the giants were destroyed when the world was blessed. Sometimes this is described as a destruction by fire. In some statements God himself came to bless the world and introduce Christianity. In others this task is ascribed to Jesus, Saint James or Saint Peter. In still others, the advent of Christianity was the work of a priest or of Vasco de Quiroga.

When the world was thus blessed, the giants buried themselves with their implements and they became stones, the idols and tools that now come to light when the land is tilled. The reason for their hiding lay in their old religion and failure to accept Christianity:

> "They lived in error." "They buried themselves [because] persecuted by the Belief [*i.e.*, Christianity]." "That happened to them because they didn't want to see the blessing of the world."

The more elaborate stories refer to the particular way in which the kings of the k'uaŋári in Jarácuaro and Ihuatzio fled from the Faith to become enchanted in different places. Those who accepted Christianity were saved and became the ancestors of the present people:

> "Some people got the blessing from the priest [Don Vasco] while others died alone because of their ignorance. The former are in heaven now while the others are buried with their belongings."

775 The Tarascans firmly believe in man's survival after death. The basis for this belief lies in man's division into body and soul. The soul for the Tarascan resides in the heart, and the word heart (*minzíta*) stands also for soul; while the other words

775 (*ánima, uaɹíča, uaɹíri*) designate the soul after death and also the dead body, their meaning being like that of the English 'ghost' or 'dead'. The separation of body and soul is possible before death in certain situations.

753 828 Fright is one of the concepts of disease. When a person is frightened his soul is about to leave his body. "My heart [*i.e.*, soul] goes out", he will say, and this is supposed to upset him a good deal. Total loss of one's soul is not very common. It is the result of the Devil's stealing the soul when a person becomes frightened at the sight of him. This loss causes insanity and almost immediate death, unless the person has his soul restored.

775 Also, the soul of a person who is about to die spends a period visiting all the places where he (she) has been and also his (her) relatives. The soul wanders while the person is asleep or feeling very tired. These souls can occasionally be seen by people, and experiences of seeing souls are very common items in folklore, especially in the Sierra where ghosts (*uaɹíča*) follow men, and by touching, blowing or spitting at them can cause sickness and death.

A very important concept of Tarascan folklore is that of selling one's soul to the Devil, who, in some cases, keeps the soul while the person is still alive. Also, the souls of persons otherwise doomed can be in hell before their death.

761 775 773 Death is caused by the final separation of body and soul. The body perishes while the soul goes on existing. The destiny of the dead is explained in a creation story. The Devil, the cleverest son of God, decided that he did not like the sky as God had made it. So he made the sun, the moon and the stars, and also made another sky on top of it, where he resided. God asked him to return home, but the Devil refused. So God sent Saint James, who defeated the Devil and brought him to God.

> 539 "The Devil asked God for his inheritance and said he also wanted to have people to rule over, the same as God. Then God told him his inheritance was ready, and He ordered Saint James to take the Devil down below, pulling at his chain like an animal. There was a big round iron and a chair to tie him to so he couldn't escape. There the Devil told God he needed some people and God told him, 'Yes, I will give you some. Whom do you want?' And the Devil asked for those who drown in liquor, those who die in sin, those who kill people and

539 those who die in the lake. God told him He wouldn't give him all those, because so many people die like that that there would be nobody left for Him. He would give him only those with great sin. They also agreed that they would weigh those who die in an accident, and if they were heavier than the Devil he would take them; if lighter, God would take them. And this is the agreement they had. All people who die in an accident have to be weighed to see to whom they fall."

773 775 Other stories and statements elaborate further this myth. Two concepts determine this destiny: a mechanical one, according to the circumstances of death and without moral meaning; and a second one wherein the future of the dead is a consequence—reward or punishment—of their behavior in the present world. This last concept prevails.

In what we call the mechanical concept, we include the idea that those who die in an accident (fall, run over by an automobile, etc.), or drown in the lake, go to hell, or have to be weighed in order to determine their destiny. Other ways of meeting death can determine automatically the destiny of the dead person: *e.g.*, death in fights or as result of drunkenness. In this case, however, a moral factor is involved, in that drunkenness and fighting are considered bad or sinful. Similarly, children automatically go to heaven and become little angels. The reason is that they die before they are old enough to commit sin. As one informant puts it: "They don't say *disparates* [obscene, sinful words; swearing] and they have no sins."

As a general rule, however, the destiny of the dead is determined by their good or bad behavior in this world. A balance has to be drawn between a person's good and bad actions to see if his next abode is heaven or hell. A typical statement follows:

[539] "Those who drown are doomed, and also those who die in drunkenness. Those who kill a person are doomed, and the priests do not allow them to confess, except when they take charge of the dead person's children and dress them and look after them as their own father would. Those dead 'in vice' are doomed, too."

The idea of purgatory is not common in folk stories and belief, although of course it is taught in church.

[539] "Dead children go to heaven until the age when they learn to swear; they have no sins.

773
775 **Grownups, people say some of them go to heaven, but who knows; it is necessary to go [539] through punishment first.”**

In their journeys to their abode, the dead are brought before God and/or the saints for a sort of judgment which decides their destiny. A few beliefs relate to this judgment before God, and emphasize ‘good’ behavior toward the fireplace and towards dogs. One should not spit or kick the firestones, because at the hour of death they will go to God and complain about this bad treatment. One reason given [778] is that the hearthstones represent the Holy Cross. Similarly, one should not throw hot water to the ground. The earth will complain to God and say, “This one burned me.” A black dog will also com- [825] plain if badly treated. On the other hand, if one gives alms to beggars, they will [735] speak favorably to God.

Other beliefs concern activities which, if not properly followed on earth, must be carried out after death before eternal rest is granted. Thus the hospital cargueros who do not properly participate in the week-end processions in the churchyard have to do so after death. Penitents who do not carry the heavy cross as they promised similarly have to do this after death. When a child has been baptized, [788] to become *compadres* the parents and godparents must go to the church and perform a ritualized salutation. One does not really become compadre until this has been performed. If one does not make this salutation with one's children's godparents, the soul will have to travel and meet the souls of the compadres-to-be, wherever they are, in order to perform it. Only then will the soul be free to go to its destination. Similarly, taking ashes from the hearth and treating the children well, feeding, washing, and dressing them properly, are sanctioned by the belief that the woman who does not do so on earth will be busy after death making up for her faulty behavior.

The beliefs about the dead and the proper behavior to reach heaven are confirmed in the experiences of people who die but come back to life, because it is found out that their time was not yet come. Thus, as to the destiny of the dead, some revived people report having seen the place in hell reserved for the agraristas working the land in Copujo (land belonging to Jarácuaro). Another report mentions having seen in hell people who were

773
775 still alive in town, and one particular man who had been drowned in the lake was there wrapped in a blanket and dead drunk.

In the experiences of revived people, we also find the theme of coming back to the world in order to correct or help correct bad behavior:

[539] "A woman was dead for three hours. She was ordered to come back to this world in order to go to her son who had abandoned his wife and was living with another woman. She was ordered to tell her son that he should take his wife again and only then would he be forgiven and would he be able to reach purgatory. When the woman saw them living together again, she then died."

In another case the dead person has to come back to life in order to have the mass said which he had promised to Saint Francis.

Besides coming back to life, the dead appear to living persons in dreams or otherwise in order to ask them to correct their bad behavior. In one case a dead man appears to his friend and says:

[539] "Doroteo, Doroteo, don't be afraid. It's me, your friend Refugio. Come with me where I have my money. Hidden as it is, nobody profits from it and God does not want to forgive me because of that money which I have like that and nobody finds it. Come so that you can tell my wife and then you can take as much as you want."

The man (Doroteo) had almost decided to go but suddenly he was scared and ran away.

In another case, a married couple had [428] adopted a boy. The man had promised to give him the kitchen as inheritance, but when the man died the woman did not give the kitchen to the boy:

[539] "She dreamed of her husband; she dreamed he was in hell and was taken to be burned. He told her it was her fault, that because she didn't give the kitchen to the boy they were taking him to be burned and that she should give it to him. Then an angel came and arranged the whole thing so he didn't go to the burning because he had repented. 'That's what I dreamed,' the woman says, 'and I think it's true.'"

A similar case is that of the dead bandit who had buried his money. His ghost keeps calling people to take the money and have some mass said for him.

775 An interesting theme is that of the dead
who come back to earth in order to return
773 stolen property. The following case is
among the most significant, socially speaking, in our collection:

539 "There was a hacienda steward who was very good to the peons. He used to take handfuls of corn to give them, because at that time the people were very poor and he felt sorry for them. When he died he had no sins, so he went right to heaven, because the only sin he had committed was that of giving corn by handfuls to the peons without the permission of his master. God told him that was bad because he gave away the corn without his master's permission, and he would have to go back to earth to account for what he had done.

"So he fell in the center of the hacienda courtyard and he went to his house where he used to live and said, 'My children, here I am come back.' And his wife said, 'O my dear, how right you were to come back; you are the only one I love. Besides, everyone is unhappy around here because now there is nobody to give food to them like you used to do.' But then he said, 'Look here, I came only to attend to this; you should know what happened to me up there in heaven. I came to pay my master back so that God can forgive my sin. This is why I advise you not to do what I used to do but always act like the master tells you. Now I will have to go to the fields to pay my master back.'

"So he went to see his master, and said, 'Look here, sir, I used to take handfuls of corn and beans to give to the peons and this is why I missed heaven. Now you will have to put me to work so I can pay you back. And this is what God sent me to do, to tell you.'

"He was given the oxen and the plow and he spent all his time working. He never went to his home, and he never ate; nobody could see where he was or where he went, and he was always bareheaded. Until at last he fulfilled his debt to his master. Then he went again to his house and said, 'Now my children, I am through with my debts and I can go up again.' He went to a chapel of the Virgin of Guadalupe, and knelt and said, 'My Mother of Guadalupe, I have already paid this debt I owed my master. Let me go to heaven, show me the road, my Mother.' And the roof opened and he rose right to heaven; everybody could see him.

"And this is why they said it is such a great sin to take what does not belong to one."

775 In a similar story, the woman servant who
773 used to cheat her master had to come back
and work for him again until she paid

773 him back. When the master found out what
775 had happened, however, he forgave her before she had redeemed her debt and she was able to go to heaven.

* * *

776 An outline of the nature of the saints and of the main features of their cult has
778 been given before. Most tales about the saints refer to apparitions and miracles.

The saint's image appears to some person who sees, hears, or dreams of it and calls the attention of the people. Often it is a shapeless piece of wood or stone in which someone imagines he sees a saint, usually Christ or a Virgin of Guadalupe. There are a number of such Guadalupes which usually draw only the personal devotion of the discoverer although sometimes more people bring flowers and candles to the stone. The apparitions of some famous saints are told in this same way. The saints, having gained recognition because of some miracle, are taken to the town's church, where later they are shaped into well formed images. Stones are interpreted as Virgins while Christs appear as pieces of wood which bleed when struck by an axe.

Saints occasionally wander on earth.
776 The Virgin of Cocucho goes to Ocumicho after Saint Peter. Saint James in Azajo used to leave the church during the Revolution in order to fight. Saint Peter in Jarácuaro left the town when the people were split politically and the church was closed, and experiences are told of how he was seen in the hills or how he was seen on his way to Tarejero where he went.

Tales about the activities of the saints
776 refer mostly to their miracles, rewarding
789 the good and punishing the evil. In answer to a vow offered by the devout, the saint can perform a miracle granting what was asked of him. Some of these miracles become elaborate stories like that of the man condemned to death by the agraristas and saved by Saint Peter. Or in the following two stories, saints saved the cargueros who had pledged their souls to the Devil in order to obtain money with which to make the festival:

539 "Once there was a lazy man. He had taken a cargo and the fiesta was coming closer and his wife said to him, 'Our fiesta day is coming and if you don't get busy, with what money are we going to make the fiesta? Well, how are we going to do it then?' 'Well,' he said, 'tomorrow I'll go out and see what I can find.' The

539 next day he got up and left. 'Well, the first person I meet, even if he is the Devil himself, that's the man I am going to ask for money.'

"He walked on and saw a well dressed man [*catrín*] riding a mule. The latter said, 'Where are you going, my friend?' 'There I go, sir; I left my house and I said the first man I meet I will tell my business.' 'Yes, what is it?', 'Well, this and this.' 'Well, man, I'll tell you something. If you give me the individual who comes out to meet you when you come from work, I will give you what you need.' The man thought he meant the dog that met him every day. He said, 'Yes, of course.' 'Then I will bring you the money, but the day I bring it, don't let your wife out. You must be the only one to come out to receive it.' So he went to his house and told his wife he was getting the money.

"Three nights went by, and at the fourth one he heard the bustle and cries of muleteers, 'Ah, mule!' Then they arrived at the house and the chief himself gave him the money. 'Where shall we put it?' 'There in that box.' And his wife was listening and said to her daughter, 'Listen, how much money. I wonder who he is.' So they poured out all the money and they left, and the mules, snorting, threw out lots of sparks. 'Sir,' the man said, 'I will have to have fireworks and have a bullfight, and bring some music.' 'I will bring you the bulls, toreador and everything. I will bring you the music and I will send you a man to make the fireworks for you.'

"Well, that's how it was. The day before the festival, the fireworks men arrived and there they made the fireworks in a minute. The music and the bulls arrived as well. Thus he made the fiesta. He went to the priest to give him the money for the mass, but the priest didn't want to accept it because he didn't recognize it. He saw it was no good. Well, the fiesta was finished and the day came when he had to deliver what he had pledged. The fiesta was over and he was as poor as before. He was sad when the day came. He had a daughter and it was she he had offered. The Devil when he brought the money told him, 'It's your daughter I want, not your dog as you thought.' 'Well, the money is already here, I will fulfill my pledge,' the man had answered.

"The day came and they left. They took the road the Devil had told him. They were on the road when they saw a little chapel. The daughter was very devout. She said, 'Father, let's go see that little chapel. Wait here for us.' The mother was with them. The man sat down and they went to the chapel. There was a Virgin; they prayed to her and the mother said, 'O most Holy Mother, I don't know where my husband is taking me and my daughter. You are the one who should save us.' Well, they felt sleepy and they fell asleep right there in the chapel. And the image stood up and with another image, they both went out dressed as the woman and her daughter.

"They all went to the Devil's house, they got to a big gate made all of iron. They knocked and a servant came out. 'Is the great man here from his house?' 'Yes, he is here.' He went to the great Devil and said, 'They didn't look right to me, those people.' 'Go, then.' They went to open the gate and immediately after he saw them he turned his face and staying like this, back to them, he told the man, 'You should thank your daughter, because she is so devout; that's what saved you. These you bring me here are images; that's not what I had asked you. Go, leave then.' He shut the door and the man left, very thoughtful.

"On their way back his daughter asked him again to go to the chapel. Then the other women woke up and they went out to the father. When they left, the father said, 'Let's go, my daughter,' and they came to the house. It was then when they talked and the man notified his wife how everything had happened and he began to think and think and think, and it even cost him his life so much thinking of what he had done and what he had seen there in hell where he met the devils."

[This is alleged to be true; the informant does not remember in which town it happened.]

* * *

"A very poor man took the cargo of San Antonio. He said, 'Where am I going to get the money?' He went out to ask for money and he met a man on the road who asked him, 'Where are you going?' 'I am looking for work to see how much I can get in advance because I have a cargo.' 'Well, I will give you some money, come with me.' He was a well dressed white man [*catrín*]; he took the man to the cave and there he asked for what he needed. They told him, 'Don't worry. From here you will get the music, fireworks, and everything.' He came in and he saw the cave fixed up very pretty. He came and the music arrived, And the white man asked, 'Will you have a bullfight too, so that I can send the bulls?' 'Yes, we will have bullfighting for two days.' The catrín sent the bulls.

"When the fiesta was over the man went back to the cave in order to work and redeem his pledge, but in the place where he first was given to eat there were some old women grinding dirty things. They had told him he would have to spend some time in there and he thought he would like it. They told him, 539 'The first job you will have to do is to go fetch wood. Put these sandals on. When you wear them out you are free.' And the sandals were made of iron. He left very thoughtful and on his way he met a bearded man who asked him where he was going. The man told him the whole story. Asked the bearded one, 'Well, have you repented? Take the sandals off and go to the wood and when you come back I will give them back to you already worn out.' This bearded man must have been God; He made a miracle for him and He gave him the sandals all thin, so that man could get out very soon.

"The people in that place where they were grinding were the souls of the dead and they were as in hell or purgatory."

[776] In other miracles, God or the saints punish bad actions, mainly failure to comply promptly with the cult requirements. Nonfulfillment of a vow brings about an accident, caused by the saint as punishment. For example:

A man was going in pilgrimage to San Juan Parangaricutiro when he thought he had better go to Tingambato. He fell over a ravine with his donkeys and died shortly thereafter.

A woman was going to visit the Christ in Carácuaro when she felt tired and sat down and regretted having started the trip. She became enchanted in a nearby hill.

Another woman in a similar predicament became a stone when she complained of the trip. Dancers who perform before reaching the saint also become stone.

776 Other miracles punish sacrilegious actions of the sinners. For instance, a revolutionary colonel tried to chop off the head of the image of the Christ of Carácuaro. It bled and the colonel repented, but he became sick and suffered without being able to die until he asked for pardon.

Lack of concern for the saints is also punished. A man obtained wealth from Saint Anthony, but lost it when he forgot about the saint. Another man could not enter heaven because he found no saint to sponsor him, as he had no devotion.

* * *

In opposition to God and the saints, the Devil appears as the bad supernatural and advocate of bad behavior. The creation of the Devil has been mentioned before.

The Devil appears together with a host of demons of which he is king. These demons seem to be those given to him by God when he was created, the doomed souls. The pre-Christian people (k'uaŋári)

776 and some natural elements also are called demons. As there is only one word (*noambákiti*, evil one) both for the Devil and the demons, it is used sometimes as if the Devil were omnipresent, and at other times as if there were many different demons.

776 The Devil inhabits hell under the earth
where he rules over the doomed dead. He
778 also attends "ugly" places—woods, caves,
ravines, volcanos, the places where the
[772] pre-Christian giants were buried, etc. In
these places the Devil appears. It is said that in those places "they frighten", because the appearance of the Devil causes fright. Places where the ancient people became enchanted are called *encanto* (enchanted place), and this name is used for all places where the Devil appears regularly at a given hour when music is heard or a peculiar-looking animal is seen.

The distribution of souls between God
776 and the Devil has been mentioned. As the
775 Devil gets the wicked souls, that is, those
who have sinned, his activities are directed
773 towards provoking bad behavior and thus
winning souls for himself. The Devil goes after drunkards. Wherever there are drunkards, there is the Devil. He induces people to drink by appearing to them in human form. Or he persecutes drunkards in order to take them to hell with him, or mixes among them in order to make them fight. Similarly the Devil tries to make everyone quarrel and fight. Experiences are told of how one, while drunk, saw the Devil or how an animal (i.e., the Devil) was seen leaving a place where there was a fight.

Another way of getting souls is for the Devil to take the form of a woman and go after men. Many men tell experiences of this type. Going to see a sweetheart during the night, the boy suddenly realizes she has hairy hands or goat's feet, or some other beastly attribute which makes him realize that it is the Devil he is with. Walking in the streets during the night, one sees a pretty woman and follows her, but at a certain movement sees some of her beast-like features. The Devil disguised as a woman tries to take the man out of town and take him to some ravine or cave in the woods which is the way to hell. To women, the Devil appears as a rich man (*catrín*) who marries the girl, which means taking her to hell.

In these experiences of drunkards or lovers, the victim prays when he realizes

773 he is with the Devil. The Devil will leave
775 him because of his prayers, or else will be
776 unable to take the man with him because
his intended victim has a relic of some saint.

Another way in which the Devil can get hold of a soul is by buying it. A man will pledge his soul (and sometimes also his children's) to the Devil in exchange for some gift, usually wealth or knowledge. This theme is one of the most common in Tarascan folklore (Tarascan, *pijȼʌkuɹin*, to make a pact with the Devil). Men most commonly sell their souls to the Devil in exchange for money. One meets the Devil, who is well dressed as a city dweller (*catrín*), and he promises to give money in exchange for the man's soul or that of one of his children. On the following night the man receives mules loaded with coins or he is taken to hell where he receives the money. In some cases, the man who has made a pact with
[825] the Devil receives an animal (Tarascan,
japíŋgua), a sort of snake, which he keeps in a box and which excretes coins. Or else he receives a bull or sheep and then his animals grow very fast.

This concept, that an animal may be
825 given by the Devil, merges with that of the
776 owner of the animals. Animals, in specific
cases cattle and fish, are supposed to have a king or owner and if one gets hold of him, one can get as much of that species as one wants. This owner is also called *japíŋgua*. For some people it has no relation to the Devil. The owner of the fish is bigger than the common fish, swims at the head of the others and has a crown on its head. It can be seen but not caught. For many people, however, this japíŋgua is the Devil, and one can make a pact with him by which in exchange for his soul, the man will be lucky in fishing. Similarly, the japíŋgua of cattle is often spoken of as belonging to a rich man who has made a pact with the Devil.

Marrying a rich man also appears sometimes as a compact with the Devil.

Other than those of wealth, most pacts
754 with the Devil refer to witchcraft. Witchcraft is learned in this fashion: The novice
776 has to go to a cave (usually taken there by
another witch) where he (or more commonly she) has to spit on a Crucifix or perform some other sacrilegious act, finally meeting the Devil, who in exchange for his (her) soul gives the knowledge of witchcraft.

775 The evil dead who go to hell (or at least some of them) become devils or devil-like
776 spirits. This is an important concept in Tarascan folklore. We saw, for instance, how those people drowned in lakes or wells go to hell. Places where such accidents have happened are very dangerous because the drowned "pull people in, and cause canoes to capsize so that people drown". In some cases the water spirits died long ago in the past. They are mythical characters, [773] like the three daughters of the king of Tzintzuntzan, who were hidden in order not to see the blessing of the world; or the well spirits in the mountain towns, who discovered the springs but were plunged into the water by the people in the remote past. These spirits are called devils by informants, when asked about spirits' nature, and in some stories their devil-like attributes are clearly seen.

When a man has been murdered, a heap of stones is placed on the spot where the event took place. The stone on top of the head is marked with a cross and is called *krús ánimiri* (Tarascan from Spanish, cross of the soul). Anyone can put this soul to his service by getting hold of the cross. The cross is taken home and the soul haunts the house and scares intruders away. A soul's cross can be prayed to in order to ask the soul for help in getting a relative out of prison, or finding a lost animal.

778 The middle finger of a very brave dead man can also be used to put the soul at
775 one's service. The finger placed in front of a door has the virtue to open it, although one has to be brave enough to stand the sight of the dead man who appears on the door sill.

Many beliefs treat of hidden treasures. In one of these it is said that when a person wants to bury money to keep it secure, he kills a man or has one killed by somebody else and buries the dead man with his money. The dead man keeps the money, and frightens anybody who comes along. Only a very brave man could take the money out.

In the case of the soul's cross, the dead man's finger, or the dead man buried with money, it seems clear that we deal with the dead which do not reach their abode and are put to service by someone. In our material, however, this concept is not explicitly given. When asked about the nature of these dead persons, informants

775 tend to identify them with devils or to say that the Devil is behind all that.

778 Doomed evil souls can be invoked, too, in witchcraft. Thus, those who died in accidents or were murdered are prayed to 754 so that they will kill one's enemy. This 775 takes place at the stone heap or in front of the cross, if it has been taken away. Also, in one formula for divination, the brave spirits are invoked, and two are mentioned in particular, those of Chavez García, a bandit, and Zapata (agrarista leader).

RELIGIOUS IDEOLOGY AND FOLKLORE AS EXPRESSION OF THE FOLK CULTURE

A. VALUES SANCTIONED IN IDEOLOGY

An outline of Tarascan folklore and 128 main religious concepts has been given in terms of the ideas of good and evil, which seem to pervade the entire body of belief. In order to discuss the social implications of this ideology, we shall sum up what is considered good or evil in all the elements which are mentioned in our collection. We shall do so from the point of view of evil elements since this is the exposition to which our material seems to lend itself more readily.

Harmful natural elements are consid- 821 ered bad and are related to the Devil. They either are caused by him or are 776 special manifestations of him. Thus the tornado is a water-snake, a devilish creature in itself. When the Devil wants to take some one away, he does so in this form. Similarly, a whirlwind is a lame devil, his limping explaining his circular motion.

Hail is equally bad and is closely connected with the idols or 'saints' of the heathens. The same association is found in some cases in lightning, although this shares also the good character of rain. The volcano was made by the Devil, as some- [823] thing bad which only he can do, even if following orders from God. When the volcano is personified, it is the same as the Devil.

The material which is of more interest to 183 our subject, however, is not that referring to nature but to social behavior. An account of what is considered bad behavior will show what institutions and what social order are sanctioned by the Tarascan ideology.

For reasons of convenience, we classify the modes of behavior which are considered bad into (a) behavior against the mores of the whole population, and (b) be-

183 havior against the interests of a certain class or institution.

(*a*) Among the behavior which is considered bad, we find activities which are harmful to the social body in general without regard to special group interests. Thus, drunkenness is incited by the Devil. He leads drunkards to disregard friends and family and to quarrel. The dead as a [775] consequence of drunkenness go to hell. In the same way, fighting is incited by the Devil and both the killed and the killer are doomed.

Behavior against the family and disapproved sex relations loom large under this heading. Rebelliousness against the [773] father (God, in this case) in the creation myths caused the Devil's damnation. Killing the father equally dooms the murderer in one story; and one of the causes for the outbreak of the volcano in Paricutin is said to have been punishment for a patricide which had happened there. Disobedience toward parental authority is also condemned in a prodigal son type of tale.

Deserting one's wife and living with another woman bar entrance into heaven. In a story where a man agrees to lend his wife to a friend, they are taken away by the Devil. Marriage between brother and sister among the mountain spirits occurs in one story, and their son is half snake, proof of his devilish nature. When blessed, they disappear amidst thunder and whirlwinds.

[773] Cain, by killing his brother Abel, caused the flood in one creation story. The *llorona* is the spirit of a woman who killed her son; she is condemned to wander on earth crying for her baby.

Failure to become godparents (*compadres*) according to proper custom is punishable by having to look for the other person after death in order to perform the ceremony. Similar punishment awaits the woman who does not take proper care of her children; she will have to do so after death.

Sex is a powerful bait the Devil uses to trap his victims, although not quite bad in itself. Thus the Devil appears as a seducing woman to draw men into the woods; or when a boy goes to see his sweetheart in the night, the Devil takes her form to catch him. A boy who used love magic powder loses his heart (*i. e.*, soul) to the Devil.

Disobedience to the father, killing the father, deserting the wife and living with

183 another woman, lending one's wife, marriage between brother and sister, killing a brother or a son, failure to become *compadres* according to custom, not taking good care of children—such are the sins against the family.

754 Witchcraft is learned from the Devil by selling him one's own soul or even one's children's. Consequently, witches are doomed to hell and all their activities are definitely evil; they make people sicken and die, they ask for the help of the devils, and they deal sacrilegiously with the church.

183 (*b*) Behavior against special interests or groups, which is considered evil in Tarascan folklore, can be arranged under two main headings: (1) that relating to money and property; and (2) that relating to the Church and organized religion.

(1) All the evil associations of money come out very clearly in the very common theme of the man who sells his soul to the Devil, money being the main cause for his doing so. The same moral is found in other stories: In a number of tales, a poor girl's marriage to a rich man leads only to her damnation. The cupidity of the people of San Juan Parangaricutiro in connection with the pilgrims to their fiesta leads to their destruction by the volcano of Parícutin. The priest who wants to keep the money a boy found and took to him to be blessed is turned into stone. Those who do not fulfill promises regarding inheritance find their failure to do so an impediment to entering heaven.

The bad association of money is thus clearly established. Poverty, work (richness and idleness go together in Tarascan world view), and resignation are the good qualities opposed to those associated with money. "If you marry a rich man, you will not love God; you better marry a poor man and think always of God." Marrying a rich man "you profit only for a while and then you have to pay for it in the other world." For the rich, it is good to give away property. Beggars will speak favorably to God. In the story of the rich man who gave corn to the poor in times of scarcity, God rewards him by making him the spirit of rain.

This censure of wealth and praise of poverty, however, form but one aspect of the attitude towards property. Certain tales clearly stress, on the contrary, the rightness of property, and damnation is brought to whoever dares attack it. In one

183 story, communal land is thus defended. The man who sold it against the community's interests is put out of the village and goes to live in the woods where he eats snakes and becomes insane. The rich are defended in the two stories about the dead who have to come back to earth in order to repay their masters. The landowner is clearly supported in one of them: the foreman who gave his master's corn to the peons has to come back to earth and sweat at the plow until he pays his master back. This punishment is intended not only to redeem his sin but also to enable him to tell the people "always to act as the master tells you."

Even poor peasants condemn land distribution as going against this principle, [775] and the agraristas as recipients of that land are doomed to hell; the burning place in hell is ready for them. The Devil wanders freely wherever they prevail. They are to blame for the volcano [823] (Parícutin) in a number of opinions, no matter what is the particular action that brings the whole thing about

(2) Much material deals with the 183 wrongness of anything that is against the Church and organized relation, including 794 both the folk cult and orthodox Catholicism.

Taking cargos is considered necessary to reach heaven: "Vasco de Quiroga instructed us to take cargos in order to reach salvation; it is a work in this world in order to be able to go to heaven." "Cargos are to serve God." In Jarácuaro the cargueros wear a crown during processions and it is said that those who take no cargos have no crown, thereby diminishing their standing before God. In Tzintzuntan it is said that the carguero who does not participate in the Saturday processions has to do so after death.

The financial burden of cargos, discussed before, is reflected in the folk theme of the prospective carguero who sells his soul (or his daughter's) to the Devil in order to get money with which to finance the festival at his charge. In two of three cases [776] with this theme, the saints intervene to rescue the pledged soul.

[793] The priest is considered the representative of God and it is felt that he has to be obeyed.

Failure to fulfill obligations toward God 688 brings punishment. Adam and Eve are 183 condemned to work. The man who refuses to give food to Saint Anthony disguised

183 688 as a beggar loses his wealth. He who fails to make a promised pilgrimage dies in an accident. The man who does not pay for the mass he promised Saint Francis is sent back to earth after his death so he will fulfill his pledge.

A number of cases refer to Carácuaro, a place in the Tierra Caliente the Tarascans visit very often, where a famous Christ is venerated. The pilgrim who gets tired on the road and gives up the trip remains behind enchanted on a mountain. The woman who complains about the heat and does not want to go on, and the dancers who danced before they reach the town are punished by being turned to stone.

The punishment of sacrilege is a common theme. The revolutionary colonel who beats the Christ of Carácuaro becomes very sick and cannot die until he asks for pardon. The landowner who tries to dissuade his peons from going to church is burned with his cigarette. The men building a movie house in Pátzcuaro where formerly a church stood are subject to fatal accidents. Sacrilegious behavior of the agraristas is the cause of God's sending the volcano to Parícutin. According to different stories, they destroy a cross, steal the Holy Host, or throw an image of Christ to a bull.

The blessing given by the church is essential. Everything which has not its [778] approval (blessing) is bad: animals which have been created by the Devil and not by God or the saints, and which consequently have not been blessed — coyotes, snakes, the fish taken from a pool which has not been blessed; money coming from the Devil; and of course the non-baptized.

The same theme occurs in myths. People [773] who lived before the blessing of the world [172] are bad; their ruins are haunted places and their idols are devils. Enchanted people are devils and have to be blessed by a priest before becoming normal beings.

Thus, Tarascan religious ideology and 183 771 folklore primarily sanction the values of the folk culture. They support the family (understood in terms of local culture), attack witchcraft, defend private property and the proper observance of the folk religion. In their defense of poverty can be seen a defense of the Indian way of life. The money economy imposed from the outside is a disruptive influence in the village community, creating conflict within it or the loss of land to outsiders. The [776] Devil giving money always appears as a

183 771 [776] well dressed non-Indian (*catrín*). The traditional sponsorship of religious festivals *(cargos)* also disrupts the social order in the villages because of their rôle in impoverishing the sponsors. The Devil steps in to get the carguero's soul by providing the money he needs to hold the festival. The folk value of cargos prevails, however, as the saint proceeds to save the carguero.

In so far as Tarascan religion is part of the national religion, a certain national social order and certain institutions are also supported. Adherence to the priest and to the dictates of the Church indicates such an endorsement of the church's national rôle and the social order which it supports. The moment there are anticlerical groups considered devilish because of their opposition to the Church, the whole weight of this body of belief is brought against them.

Similarly, defense of property, which in terms of local culture is defense of small property, can become support of a national order based on large property (as in the story defending the hacienda owner). Sanction of poverty can mean defense of the Indian way of life against intrusion, but viewed nationally, unequal distribution of wealth is sanctioned by virtue of poverty and the social order based on it.

Tarascan ideology, then, sanctions the traditional folk culture, but conflict with the outside is evident, and the fact that the folk culture is part of a wider society means that a certain national order is also sanctioned.

B. SUPERNATURAL SANCTIONS IN SOCIAL CONFICT

668 798 In previous chapters we have examined the agrarista movement and its anticlerical character. This anticlericalism resulted on the one hand in the agrarista's connection with the national anticlerical government from which he expected to receive lands, and in the opposition met in the Church itself, which was nationally opposed to the agrarian reforms. On the other hand, the main local cause for the agrarista anticlericalism was the cargo system for the local cult organization, which exacted too much from the Indians and was in many cases responsible for the loss of their lands.

We also gave the reasons for opposition to the agraristas and for their decline in villages where small landowners prevailed, and the following success of the Catholic reaction. Within this reaction the trend

668 798 against the traditional cargo system is again discernible, although this time under the cloak of a more orthodox Catholicism. Thus people are divided according to their appreciation of some cultural institution: for cargos (traditionalist) or against them (agraristas and some militant Catholics); for the Church (traditionalists and militant Catholics) or aganist it (agraristas).

Since the ethical religious ideology sanctions those institutions thus in conflict, let us see how supernatural sanction of political groups is evidenced in folk narratives.

183 668 Corresponding to the general anti-agrarista trend, we find in the tales use of the good and evil theme in order to prove the wickedness of the agraristas. A number of experiences in which people see the Devil take place in towns where the agraristas dominate, doubtless a reflection of the connection between the two evils.

At the time of our stay in Jarácuaro, the level of the lake was falling, leaving considerable extensions of land dry. At that time in Ihuatzio, which is strongly Catholic, an agrarista group was formed to get this land for themselves instead of sharing it with the whole town. News soon reached Jarácuaro that the Devil had been seen in Ihuatzio. The following market day in Pátzcuaro brought more complete news:

> [539] [776] "In Ihuatzio they saw the Devil. He came out of the mountains and he crossed the town through the center. He looked like a human, but had feet like those of donkeys. The people wanted to hit him, but they were not able to reach him. They say he came out because many have now become agraristas. In order to get the land at the lakeshore the town has split."

A similar story is told of another town:

> 539 "This is what happened to a man from Tócuaro when agrarismo was so powerful. This man remembered an errand he had to do at Pichátaro and he left; this was about eleven o'clock at night. He went down right to the road and there he saw a man on horseback. They greeted each other: 'Good evening.' 'Good evening.' 'Where are you going?' 'To Pichátaro.' 'I am going to Puácuaro. Shall we travel together?' 'All right. Let's go.'
>
> "'Where do you come from?' the stranger asked. 'I come from Tócuaro, and you?' 'Well, I am here and there, sometimes in Tzurumútaro, sometimes in San Pedro, San Bartolo or Puácuaro; those are the towns where they like me best.' 'And what about Tócuaro?' 'No, you don't like me at all; you have there an old

> 539 man who does not let me in.' [This is Saint Francis.] And the man from Tócuaro did not realize whom he was talking with. So they arrived at Aróсutin where their roads separated and the stranger asked: 'Don't you want a cigarette?' 'Yes.' 'Here it is.' And when he lit the cigarette the man from Tócuaro saw his eyes which seemed to be burning, so bright they were. He threw the cigarette away and left. He had only walked a few steps when fright caught him. His hands and feet were sweating and he left the road and spent the night in the open. He did not arrive at Pichátaro until the next day and then he told what had happened to him."

668 776 San Bartolo, San Pedro, Tzurumútaro and Puácuaro are agrarista towns on the lakeshore; the Devil is welcome there. In Tócuaro, however, they are not agraristas; they follow their patron saint (Saint Francis), and the Devil cannot get in.

Similarly, in Tzurumútaro, another agrarista town, "there appeared an old woman who used to talk to men on the street corners. When she left she went to a ravine. She was a devil."

In Huecorio 'the Enemy' (euphemism for the Devil) came out one night roaring like a bull. The dogs went after him and he became a black dog dragging something like a long skin. He appeared one night after the church had been blessed and mass had been said for the first time. This was three years ago (*i. e.*, 1942).

Agraristas are also mentioned in an experience of a man who, having come back to life after being dead for a few hours, reports having seen in hell the place prepared for burning the agraristas working the land in Copujo, Jarácuaro.

In one incantation, the spirits of the agrarista leader, Zapata, and the revolutionary bandit, Chávez García, are mentioned as bad spirits whose help is asked: "You brave spirits, which are now in the other life. Now, in this moment, come to me. You, spirits of Chávez García and Zapata."

In the following story, the supporter of the Church is miraculously saved from the agraristas:

> 539 "At the time when the priests were being persecuted, there was a man who defended the church very much. Nobody did anything to him; he was not burned nor anything. The agraristas put him in jail. He had spent three days in jail, and they wanted to convince him that if he would go on defending the Church

539 they were going to kill him, but if he did not, they would let him free. He said they had better kill him. So they were going to kill him. They told him: 'Tomorrow we are going to kill you; make up your mind.' And he said he had already made up his mind. It was night. An angel came and opened the doors. The man was asleep and the angel told him: 'Come, then. Get out.' So the man went out after him and he walked through where the soldiers were and not even one woke up. Next day the light broke out and the soldiers went to kill him and nobody was there and everything was locked up tight. Our Lord Saint Peter had left him on the outskirts of Rome. He went into the city and when the call for mass struck there he was. He heard the mass and he told the Pope everything that had happened, and the Pope said, 'Right now in your town they want to kill the soldiers because they did not pay attention. I am going to send word that you are here, not to kill them.' So, they did not kill them."

[668] [823] The anti-agrarista theme appears important in the tales about the Parícutin volcano.[3]

"At that time there were many agraristas. One man from Corupo spoke to a man from Parícutin, to another from San Juan, to still another from Zacán, and to a fourth from Zirosto. They got together and said, 'Let us go and steal the Holy Sacrament.' They went to San Juan and took it out from the church. And in the whole town only one man noticed that the Holy Sacrament was no longer there, but he was afraid of saying so lest the people blame him. He noticed on three days during mass that the Holy Sacrament was not there and at last he told some friends whom he trusted. The agraristas took the Holy Sacrament to Zacán and they wondered what to do with it. They spent some days in Zacán; then they went to Zirosto, and finally they took it to Parícutin in order to hide it. The owner of a land plot there was an agrarista, and he said, 'Well, as you don't know what to do with it, let us take it to my plot.' And they hid it there.

"And the Eternal God said, 'What shall I do with those people? They are the most wicked in the world. I don't know what to do with them.'

"Then the Devil appeared and said, 'There is a way.' 'How?' 'Sure, there is a way so that they shall suffer, but they will not be the only ones to suffer.' Then God said, 'Go then, but let me think it over for a month.' The Devil asked for too much, but at last they drew the line within

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[3] Tarascan stories about the volcano have been discussed by the author in a previous paper (Carrasco, 1946).

539 which the people had to suffer. Then God gave His permission and the Devil made the volcano at once."

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"In the plain where the volcano burst forth there was a cross which the missionary fathers had buried because there was a danger in that plain. A man from Parícutin was working that land; when he was plowing he saw the cross. He did not approve of it, he called a friend, dug, and took an arm from the cross; he chopped it off. Inside was a golden cross to keep the volcano from breaking forth. They took it out and broke a wooden cross which was on top of the golden one and the agraristas burned it. Then the volcano erupted. They say that because the people from Parícutin were so bad and broke the cross, the volcano broke out. Before the volcano broke out, little figures were seen dancing, city-clothed people (*catrines*), and also four whirlwinds. Dionisio was getting close and felt the earth was hot so he said, 'Now it is going to break out; I better go.' And he heard a noise, *fu*! and smoke came out. When he arrived home it was already roaring."

* * * *

"Once when the people of Parícutin had a land dispute with those of San Juan, a priest had told the people to gather a lot of money and bury it there. So he put the money and on top of it a cross and he blessed it because he said that to him who hurt the cross or took the money out, God would send a punishment. Some agraristas felled the cross with an axe and took the money. Shortly thereafter the volcano broke out. And that is the reason."

* * * *

"The volcano appeared because the agraristas from Parícutin had felled a cross which had Holy Hosts inside. The cross was placed by a missionary father that same year so that no water snake [tornado] would fall there. They felled it and, the day after, the volcano was there."

668 798 538 The political conflict and the agrarista anticlericalism have thus produced an increase in the use of some themes of the traditional religious ideology, namely those which point out the wickedness of the people who oppose the Church and the cult.

On the subject of cargos the folk ideology maintains that they are necessary in order to enter heaven. However, we did not find this belief elaborated upon by the more traditional people in opposition to the militant Catholics who reject the car-

668 gos.[4] Conversely, the militant Catholics do
not seem to use folk ideas in order to argue
798 their stand; we simply find disbelief in the
idea that the cargos have supernatural
538 sanctions. These Catholics are supported
by their priest who holds the same views.

Full agrarista material is lacking, for our collection was gathered in conservative villages. A volcano story was told by an agrarista from Charapan who had taken refuge in Cocucho. The tale demonstrates belief in religion and clearly condemns fiestas, making them the cause for the volcano, instead of blaming the agraristas as do most other stories. The agrarista policy of suppressing fiestas finds in this story a neat ideological justification:

539 "A bearded man appeared near San Juan before the eruption had started. He found a cowboy and asked him, 'Where are you going?' 'I am looking for some oxen,' he said. 'Well, haven't you seen them where you have been?' 'No, I have not.' 'Well, look here. After all, nobody is going to take them. I want you to do an errand for me. There is a hole back there where you were. Go and step on it and you will find a man. Tell him that I need him.'

"The cowboy went there, but the hole was too small to get into, so he went back to tell the bearded man. 'Sure you can get in,' he replied. 'You just step hard on it.' The boy did so and he sank. He arrived at a big house, where he told the man there what he was ordered to say: 'A bearded man sends me to tell you that he needs you.' 'What is the matter, then?' 'I don't know. I was looking for some animals when he found me and sent me on this errand.' 'Let's go then.'

"And they went out and they arrived where the bearded man was. He said that he wanted this man from the underworld to destroy the town of San Juan before the time came for the fiesta. 'But I cannot do that!' 'Sure, you can. You must destroy the town before the holy day so that no fiesta will be made.' And so they left, and the cowboy left, too, and he found the oxen where the bearded man had told him.

The bearded man was God and the other one was the Devil. God didn't want any more fiestas in San Juan, because the poor people went there and spent so much money because everything was very expensive. Besides, they were robbed even within the Church, and so the poor people were left without any money at all. That's why God destroyed everything."

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[4] It should be noted that no particular effort was made to obtain them. Neither, however, was an effort made to get the anti-agrarista motives which so often appeared.

668 538 Not enough data are available for us to say whether or not stories of this type are as common among the agraristas as the anti-agrarista motifs are frequent among the opposite party. The existing material suggests that such is not the case. Agrarista informants tell the same stories and experiences as the more conservative informants, whose stories sanction folk culture values. Their political position shows rather in the attitude with which they tell the story, one of disbelief.

* * *

771 538 Tarascan religious ideas and folklore sanction the Church and the proper observance of the cult, both in their local (folk culture) and national aspects.

The stories and case histories collected show an abundant use of religious motifs to point out the wickedness of the anticlerical agraristas. Those stories are told from the point of view of the traditional folk culture. The militant Catholics who are partly in conflict with that folk culture also tell such stories, for they attack their agrarista adversaries and sanction allegiance to the Church with which they are closely connected. In that aspect (cargos) in which they oppose the traditional folk culture, they do not use religious motifs except in that they support the priest who denies the need for this activity. Their attitude is one of lack of belief in those traditional ideas which sanctioned the sponsorship of festivals. They, like the agraristas, show a lack of belief in the traditional concepts of folk religion.

THE IDEOLOGY OF THE FOLK RELIGION IN DECLINE: ATTITUDES OF BELIEF

771 The social content of the religious ideology having been examined, we can now discuss how the change in this ideology is expressed in different belief attitudes which consequently involve changes in the meaning, use and function of a given religious concept or myth. We shall find different attitudes as to belief, and we shall try to correlate them with the economic and political tendencies discussed in previous chapters. We shall see how the breaking down of a folk religion involves a change from total belief in the content of the folk religious concepts and myths, towards skepticism, disbelief, and acceptance of outside (national) opinions. This change is not gradual and uniform, but results in extreme attitudes which can be

771 correlated with the different parties in the political conflict.

In the previously presented outline of that part of the religious ideology which is related to the concepts of good and evil, the material was arranged by the author and discussed as though it were a single body of opinion, attitude, and beliefs. Actually, what any single Indian knows and believes is not so well integrated. In reality there are great differences in the kind of material any one individual knows and is able to supply. A discussion of variability in folklore could be made in terms of individual participation in this aspect of culture; the different individuals' knowledge of folklore could be related to sex, age, status, personality, and other factors. Such a discussion is not attempted in this paper.

538 One also finds great variability in the attitude toward the folklore material any one particular individual knows. This has already been pointed out in discussing types of narratives. What to one informant may be a true happening which God allowed to take place so that men can learn how to behave, to another is a fictitious story told for fun. What some tell as powerful and true manifestations of the supernatural, others tell jokingly as something which superstitious people do and believe.

771 668 These different belief attitudes are related to folk and national levels of culture (particularly in religion), and to the social and political groups described in previous chapters.

We have been describing the change processes in terms of three main tendencies: (1) the traditionalist — following and advocating strict adherence to the values of traditional folk culture, even to the extent of opposing the priest; (2) the agrarista (agrarian reformer)—anticlerical and the most closely connected with policies of the national government; and (3) the militant Catholic. The last, reacting against the economic and religious agrarista policies, but partially in conflict themselves with the traditional folk culture, tend to follow a more orthodox Catholicism, and in national politics, connect themselves with the Church and the sinarquista movement.

In the ideological realm, as to the question of how much people believe in the content of their folk religion, we can also describe three attitudes which correspond to the above socio-political tendencies: (1) Correlated with the traditionalist group is an attitude characterized by total belief in

771 668 the folk religion and the content of folklore. Most people, however, show a certain degree of disbelief. Among some (2) this goes with criticism of the Church and with the acceptance of the rational point of view taught in school. This attitude can be correlated with the agrarista position in politics. Among many people (3) some items of lore and religion are doubted or dismissed but always under the acceptance of basic religious tenets and of Church authority. The trend is thus towards a greater orthodoxy within Catholicism, by abandoning beliefs of the purely folk level. This is paralleled by the militant Catholic position in politics.

These three attitudes are ideal types in terms of which we describe individual behavior. In reality they are not necessarily pure nor does every individual connected with a particular political tendency have in every way the attitude which we correlate with that tendency. Individual differences are determined not only by political affiliation but also by personality and cultural participation in general.

771 In order better to see the balance of change we will discuss first the traditionalist position. This represents the folk culture point of view of the village community.

In the formal aspects of religion, the more conservative, traditionalist individuals or towns attach greater importance to private rituals like those connected with agriculture or witchcraft. Also, the religion based on the folk cult of the saints is the most important. These people insist on the need to continue cargos and fiestas. They oppose the priests who attempt to change this and scorn Catholics who do not care for cargos. In the field of belief, total belief in religious concepts and tales corresponds to the above attitudes. Cargos are believed to be a way of serving God and the saints, necessary to reach heaven. [773] Myths are believed. Experiences with the supernatural are told as true happenings and even wonder stories are supposed to be true.

A few examples will illustrate this attitude:

> 539 **Maximino tells how he has seen the Devil on two occasions, once as a woman and another time as a donkey. Once he discovered an attempt to bewitch him and in another case he caught a witch who had taken the shape of an owl. Once a heavy plank fell on him while he was building a house. He became unconscious**

539 and when he came to he tells how he has been dead in the other world but was sent back to life because his time had not yet come. Once in the night he was followed by a ghost trying to harm him. As a young man, he owned a dead man's finger which can be used to unlock doors. He did not want to tell the author the prayer which has to be said in order to use the finger. He did not want to have it published, because then people would use it and he would be responsible for their sins.

He thinks corn should be carefully handled; it's bad to throw it on the ground. "Corn is one's own life. That is what God Our Lord said: It is our Life. Adam sinned because Eve made him sin, and the Lord told him, 'Now you are going to work and sweat; take this adze, this spade, and this seed so that you can eat from your sweat.' When corn lies on the ground, it cries and that is not good. We mistreat it and that is bad, because it is our life, our food. Some people say they earn their living with their work, but that is only because God allowed us to be able to work. Were it not for that we would do nothing."

773
824 This explanation contrasts strongly with the attitude of other people who laugh when asked if it is bad for corn to lie on the ground.

Maximino draws morals from his stories:

[539] A man who tries to reach the end of the world dies very old before he can reach it. This teaches man that he should not attempt to learn certain things which are only God's. He tells the story of the rich man's son who leaves his house to become poor and has to be taken back home by his father. Also that of the man who tries to kill his wife he wrongly thinks unfaithful because of a friend's slander. She survives, dresses as a man, and manages to become king. Then she finds that her former husband, who has repented, has become the town drunkard.

Are these stories true? Of course; "these stories are real happenings which God allowed to happen in order that we might learn how to behave." (Mateo, on the other hand, tells this last story as fiction.)

539 Clemente tells how Saint Peter came to town descending from heaven. No doubt about it; his grandfather saw it.

Agustin tells how the ancients of Ihuatzio were enchanted and the treasures buried in the ruins. A boy had a chance to disenchant a girl and the money, but he failed when he could not carry to church the girl who had turned into

539 a snake. Agustin takes this very much to heart:
"If that sucker had stood up, all the riches
would be now his and the town's."

Pablo tells some story of the trickster, Pedro de Urdemalas. And he comments, "Those ancients were really clever, weren't they?"

Informants like Maximino, totally con-
771 vinced of the truth of their stories, are
rather unusual. This attitude is found
181 only in a few people, mainly old-timers.
Many informants have that same credul-
178 ous attitude on many points, but some
skepticism is also present. New attitudes
away from total belief in folk ideas are
found among most people, and those active
in both agrarista or sinarquista movements
share in them.

It appears that as the village community becomes increasingly part of the external world, greater acceptance of outside ideology sets in. When Indians are more drawn into the division of labor in the greater society, they begin to accept as part of this division of labor the fact that it is the outsider's job (Church, school, etc.) to rule on matters pertaining to ideology (religion, science, and so on). Unlike Maximino, who is sure of the truth of his stories, most people are full of doubts and when talking with the ethnographer express the idea that he (the ethnographer), as one coming from the outside, knows better than they do the answers to his questions.

"Who knows, really?" or "Who knows
821 what the truth is?" is a common answer
to questions about the nature of the world,
812 the sun, the moon, the volcano, and so on.
Often people will confess their ignorance
and ask questions in their turn. Sometimes
they think it silly that such questions are
put to them: "When will the volcano go
out? Why! Even the geologists don't
know." "How can we know the shape of
the world? Some people of this town have
never been even in Morelia [state capital]."

In relation to the different types of nar-
173 ratives we have described, the same process of change is apparent. Myths are sometimes doubted as perhaps not in keeping with the teachings of the Church. A complete creation myth, for instance, was recorded only after the informant, Mateo, had provided many other tales. When asked why he didn't tell this before, he answered, "I didn't think you would like it." "Is it true?" "Who knows, what do you think? I guess it is only a tale."

538 Mateo likes to tell long and elaborate entertainment stories. When a myth is not quite believed and becomes entertainment, wonder stories seem to be preferred. Also stories learned in school or read from books are highly appreciated. In Jarácuaro (874 inhabitants) two copies of the *Arabian Nights* were located in the possession of literate informants. Some other informants gave stories from that source, considering it among their best. Some were aware of the provenience of the story, but not others.

Experiences with the supernaturals which express this attitude of doubt are often told. Manuel, after telling of a supposed magician, says, "I wonder if this is true or if they just go around playing the suckers." Not only are some experiences doubted; one hears "false experiences" which ridicule certain beliefs. They cause great hilarity and it is to be supposed that they spread skepticism. Some examples follow:

539 771 A woman once told her brother that her husband had gone to the mountains in order to ask the Devil for money. Her brother thought, I am going to answer. He went after his brother-in-law and he heard him shouting, 'Devil, Devil. I want money.' His brother-in-law spoke to him. 'Come here then.' And when he came near to him, he beat him with a whip and he told him, 'Here you have your money.' The other fellow ran to his house and he was so ashamed that when his brother-in-law arrived he went to the attic.

• • •

A widow asks the sexton if the dead really come back at Hallowe'en, so that she can wait for her husband. The sexton instructs her to wait for him and have ready brandy and other things he liked to eat. In the night the sexton goes to the house and passes as the husband and asks for money and brandy. When he leaves he is drunk and falls asleep on the street. Next morning the woman leaves the house and finds that the man she thought was her husband has not been able to go back to the dead. She sees it is the sexton. "You damn —. This man made a fool of me." She takes a stick and beats him and the sexton runs away. And from that day she does not ask any more questions about the dead.

• • •

A boy's sweetheart gives him some food. He suspects she might be trying to bewitch him and takes the food to BA (the town's best known witch). BA tells him the food is dangerous and he keeps it to bury it. When

771 [539] the boy leaves, BA eats it and says, 'What an easy life, that of a sorcerer.'

771 178 This basic trend of change is found in both convinced agraristas and militant Catholics, but there are also differences which warrant a discussion.

668 The disbelief attitude is sometimes pushed to an extreme, including doubt as to religion, the authority of the Church, and the need for the cult. We saw how the agraristas identified fiestas with the social order they attacked, and tried to suppress them and the cult completely. A critical position toward religion and the Church is also found among some people who have been subjected to outside influence, including sometimes outside education, and whose political ideas would be called 'radical' although they are not directly connected with local agrarista policies. This can be considered direct national influence.

178 771 These people scorn the others as superstitious, fanatics, fools. Myths or experiences with the supernaturals are not believed and are told as something some people do or believe. The language used by Leandro in describing how the people of Cocucho thought their Virgin was weeping tears of blood is typical:

> [539] [781] ". . . And as in this town there are a lot of superstitious people, the following day . . . the woman praying the rosary began shouting and crying as the Virgin was weeping tears of blood because Saint Peter had left . . . And what really happened was that the wind waved the red paper hangings used as ornaments in the church and they were reflected on the image of the Virgin."

771 668 For the militant Catholics, agraristas are nothing but atheists. They describe them as people who have no religion, as is proved by the fact that they close the churches, ban the priests, and deal sacrilegiously with sacred objects, even destroying and burning the images of the saints.

Negation of the existence of God was recorded by an informant in Arócutin, but we do not have enough material to say to what extent this position obtains. More material from towns preponderantly agrarista is necessary before we can know to what extent lack of belief in the basic teachings of the Church arose in part locally or is due only to the fact that this group has been more under the direct

771 influence of the Government and its anti-Church policies.

668 In another agrarista informant, we find also the attitude that the saints are good but the priests are bad. This Ichan informant, although an agrarista, advised the people to hide the saints when he learned that the agraristas of other Cañada towns were coming to burn them.

The available material suggests that in the agrarista party, we would find among some people (mainly those with more outside connections and education) opinions approximating almost complete lack of belief in God, the saints, and dogmas of the Church, although perhaps believing in witchcraft. Some others would oppose the Church and the priests for political reasons but keep withal a fair amount of belief. This would compare with the existence of both traditionalists and modern tendencies in the Catholic reaction against the agraristas.

The fact remains, however, that among some people the trend away from folk religion goes with opposition to the Church and lack of belief in it. Just the opposite is observed among the militant Catholics.

The dominant milieu in most Tarascan towns — including Jarácuaro where most of this material comes from — was formed in the struggle against the agraristas. This reaction we have described as not uniform but embracing both the more conservative people, who are decidedly for the folk culture values, and the more modern, in part opposed to the folk culture, who have lately come under the influence of the sinarquista party. It is this more modern tendency within the Catholic movement which we will briefly characterize here. In it the folk ideology is in decadence, but, for political reasons, people in this group are strongly religious both in allegiance to the Church and in belief.

These are two extreme positions. It is not possible to fit every individual into one or the other group, as many people are not politically active, and both groups work together against the agraristas. They both favor religion. Differences occur when those of the more 'modern' point of view try to change the fiestas and cargos, and follow the priest who also wants to change the folk religion better to fit Catholic orthodoxy. The position against cargos among leading sinarquistas in Jarácuaro has been mentioned before. This position

771 is seen not only in their behavior but also
in the fact that their ideas about cargos
668 are changing. Whereas for the traditionalist, cargos are a necessary service to God
in order to reach heaven, some Catholics
[782] oppose this idea. They say it is only
custom, an unnecessary expenditure of money, not required to be a good Catholic, and they are supported by the priest. When discussing this point, Manuel has a ready argument: "Do you have cargos in Mexico City? You don't have them there, but people are still good Catholics."

Myths and experiences with the super-
[773] natural are usually believed, and sometimes even wonder stories, but the attitude of doubt described before is also found.

Although agraristas or radicals dismiss folk beliefs as superstitions, the prevalent pattern by which folk beliefs disappear is not through lack of belief but by some sort of explanation within the accepted ideology as to why behavior based on the disappearing belief is not found any more. Thus we see in belief the same trend as in the cult, where the tendency is toward a more orthodox Catholicism. Examples follow:

In Zopoco there are no rich men because the
539 **town Christ "does not allow the *japiŋgua* to**
operate", *i. e.*, compacts with the Devil.

• • • •

Jarácuaro used to be famous as a center of
754 **witchcraft. Prospective witches entered a cave**
behind the Church to make a compact with
778 **the Devil and learn their art. The present lack**
538 **of witches is attributed to the fact that the entrance to the cave has been covered: "Formerly there were witches because God allowed it. Now he stopped it. What there are now are some magicians who learn in books, but God does not allow many of them. Otherwise with so many books as there are, there would be many magicians and all of them would be causing evil."**

• • • •

776 **Elves are no longer seen because the Pope**
condemned them together with other devils to
539 **go back to hell; and they have not been seen thereafter.**

• • • •

In Cocucho there were many thunderstorms
821 **over a certain mountain. "A priest went and**
539 **blessed a cave in the mountain. A thunder-**
storm destroyed the cave. They said many
783 **people were seen leaving the mountain; they**

821 were crying and saying people did not care for
539 them any more; they went to Tierra Caliente."

783 * * * *

"Nowadays a dead man's finger is no longer
539 good. In olden times it was useful because
[778] miracles still were possible. Now it is all finished,
or maybe they were saints? Who knows?"

In this Catholic group, the people who
668 have the most contacts with the outside
world are not, like the agraristas, those more closely related to the government or school, but those who attend sinarquista rallies even as far away as Morelia or Guadalajara, or send boys to study for the priesthood. Like the agraristas, they are more closely connected with national life than the traditionalists, but they represent a different kind of allegiance to national institutions.

* * *

The folk culture of the Tarascan communities
182 has been characterized economically
and socially and the main traits of the
771 folk religion have been described. To the
extent that the local communities have an economic and social life independent of the external world, an ideology of its own is typical of the folk culture. It is associated mainly with unorganized religion and the celebration and organization of the local Catholic cult. To the extent that the local community is part of a wider society

[P. 56b]

182 and the cult is also part of the national
Catholic cult, we find acceptance of two
771 kinds of outside opinions. Some people
rely more than before on the authority of
the Church in questions of belief, while
others criticize the Church in the same
manner as the anticlericals throughout the
country.

With the decline of the purely folk aspects of the local culture and the community's becoming increasingly part of the external world, come the decay of religious beliefs centering around and sanctioning these folk elements, and the growth of national aspects of culture, either through connection with the Church or with anticlerical groups.

To the decline of some local cult forms and of cargos as their manner of organization, corresponds (in the realm of ideology) a lack of belief in folk concepts, resulting in either the acceptance of more orthodox Catholicism or doubt in religion in general.

This is the trend by which the folk culture seems to begin to disappear. But as in the village economy and organization of religion, these trends are not carried to the end. The traditional folklore which sanctions folk culture still has meaning, and evidence that for some people it is still alive is seen in its being used against the disruptive tendencies personified in the agraristas.

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CONCLUSIONS

128 The arrangement followed in the presentation of this material was imposed by the nature of the data. Sources for the different periods or for the national or local scenes were unequal. Thus it was necessary to examine each topic separately (economics and politics, cult organization, ideology) as it changed during the period considered rather than to follow, through successive historical stages, all the topics of Tarascan culture under discussion. A presentation of the latter sort will be attempted in this summary of conclusions.

185 177 For a point of departure we took the folk culture of the Indian communities formed during the colonial period by a blend of Spanish and Indian cultures. This culture is typical of the colonial period but its basic elements often survived into much later times, and even to the present in marginal areas. These communities were integrated with the economy of Mexico by paying tribute (or taxes), by the market, and by providing laborers for enterprises outside the local community. A great degree of economic autonomy, however, provided in each town a basis for the distinctive folk culture. It was characterized by communal landownership, agricultural techniques based on local resources and requiring the cooperation of all the villagers, the importance of household crafts, little differentiation as to wealth among the villagers, and production, for the most part, for consumption within the village or for the local market.

105 621 The local government organs were under the ultimate control of higher national authorities, but had a wide range of autonomy.

771 Catholicism, the state religion, was also the religion of the local community, and the priest was supported by the village with the sanction of the State. [796] But an important part of religion was peculiar to the local folk culture: unorganized rites around technological and life cycle activities, and also what we call folk Catholicism, folk acts of the cult, mainly festivals to the saints. A number of officers sponsoring and organizing these festivals were closely connected with the local government. 794 Cult financing was provided for by the produce or communal property devoted to

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CONCLUSIONS

794 religious expenses or by contributions from all the villagers as a group or from an individual sponsor.

771 Religious ideology in this period must have had a considerable number of ideas related to the unorganized religion, probably non-ethical and based on the personification of Nature. The Catholic ideology dominated, however. Ethical in character, it sanctioned such folk culture values as the family, small property, the Indian way of life and proper observance of the folk cult. But it also sanctioned national institutions: support of the priest and the Church and the national order which the Church in its turn supports.

621 178 These communities began to decline in the face of other growing segments of the society (primarily the haciendas), and tendencies disrupting the folk culture became evident within the communities. Forces for change were active from early colonial times in advanced areas but at a much later date in backward areas such as parts of the Tarascan region. They became strongest with the capitalist development of Mexico at the end of the nineteenth century.

423 182 178 The loss of Indian lands to haciendas diminished the importance of the Indian communities within the country. Within the Indian communities the economic impact of this development caused the abolition of communal property and the more complete individualization of landownership, the decline of crafts, more work on outside farms, increased dependency on the market, and wealth differences among the villagers.

771 [794] [735] After the separation of Church and State, the old system of organizing the religious cult no longer had State sanction. With new systems of local government the religious officers became less connected with the civil. Cult financing came to be done almost exclusively through personal contributions by sponsors, and, given the changing economic order, it constituted a burden which often led to impoverishment and the loss of land.

182 178 The factors disrupting the folk culture are evident in the folk ideology as it condemns money and wealth. With increased dependence on the outside world came

178 182 greater acceptance of outside authority in questions of ideology. Also the institutions, such as sponsorships of festivals, sanctioned by the folk ideology, were now against the interests of people within the community.

178 668 The former forces of change led to conflict within the villages incited by the Mexican Revolution and subsequent agrarian reforms. Different political trends became discernible within the villages and the people in them had different religious aspirations and policies.

Agrarista groups were formed. In Mexico agraristas are peasants who receive land (usually from former haciendas) under the terms of the agrarian reforms. Such groups exist in some Tarascan villages which were close to haciendas, but in the conservative villages studied, agraristas are groups within the village, organized to take over lands which had been lost to outsiders, or which either belonged to larger landowners within the village or were communal property. In religion they aim at abolishing the cult. They particularly forbid the sponsorship and celebration of festivals, for they see in them the cause for the loss of their lands. Consequently the body of officers organizing those festivals is also suppressed. Belief in God and the saints may be kept and folk narratives are still told which express the old local community values but there is a considerable lack of belief in an ideology which sanctions what they oppose, including the Church. Some can be easily convinced by the anti-religious teachings of outside radicals.

In the conservative communities studied, since the agraristas formed a privileged minority, a reaction arose which finally prevailed. This reaction suppressed the privileges of the agraristas, gained control of the local government, and restored the cult. Within this reaction two trends in religious policies can be discerned. One group, which might be called traditionalist, favors following the cult as of old with the earlier system of sponsorships and a revival of the political and social importance of the sponsors within the community. In ideology it correlates with total belief in

178 the content of folklore and this folklore is
668 used to prove agrarista wickedness.

The other group which seems to prevail is more closely connected with the Church
178 politically. This group restores the cult but the old causes for decline of the folk
668 religion are seen in their policy. They
771 sometimes oppose individual sponsorships
and attendant celebrations. New forms are used for organizing and financing festivals through the cooperation of all villagers. The folk cult tends to come under stricter control of the priest (tending towards greater orthodoxy) or of the civil authorities (towards secularization of the celebration). In the realm of ideology there is lack of belief in part of the folk ideas, but a basic belief and acceptance of the Church authority are kept. In belief, as in the celebrations of the cult, a more orthodox Catholicism is evident.

One can see clearly the forces of change
178 which might lead to the almost complete disappearance of the folk religion: lack of
182 sponsors for folk festivals and a consequent decline in the festivals, some disappearing and others becoming secular affairs; lack of belief in folk narratives, leading to obsolescence or to their becoming non-religious narratives; and acceptance of outside anti-clerical policies or of strict Church control in questions of religion. But as long as the economic basis of the communities persists, some amount of folk religion will also survive. The extremist anticlerical position of the agraristas could not take root. The present Catholic reaction against them represents the balance of change, effecting neither complete disappearance of the folk religion nor a preservation of the old order. Nevertheless, the old factors for change continue in operation. The conflict between conservative and disruptive tendencies goes on and a stable integration can not be attained.

Throughout this process of change the interplay of local and national factors is all the time evident. The changing folk culture of a local community can be understood only by relating the trends arising out of local conditions to the development of the nation of which the folk community forms a part.

GLOSSARY

104 **Agrarismo.** Agrarista movement or ideas.

Agraristas. Peasants who received lands under the terms of the post-revolutionary agrarian reforms (usually from haciendas). In many Tarascan villages this term is also applied to peasants who did not receive lands from the government but who nevertheless organized themselves to occupy lands taken from the community or from private landholders.

Alcalde. In colonial times, the mayor of a Spanish or Indian town.

Cabildo. In colonial times, the town council (and perhaps also, sodality council). Presently, the non-official group of cargueros and former cargueros in charge of the ceremonial organization.

Cargo. Yearly office in the religious organization of a town. It usually implies sponsorship of a saint's festival.

Carguero. Person holding a cargo.

Catrín. Person in city clothes. This term refers particularly to clothes but it also conveys the idea of a wealthy non-Indian city-dweller.

Compadres. Godparents of one's child or the parents of one's godchild.

Corregidor. In colonial times, the government official with authority over a city or provincial subdivision.

Ejidatario. Ejido member.

Ejido. In colonial times, the communal pasture lands of a village. Since the agrarian reforms after the Revolution, this term is applied to lands distributed to peasants for their use but with title held in common by the community of ejido members.

Hospital. Originally, hospital supported by a sodality and the sodality itself. This sodality also organized a substantial part of the religious cult and this function became the predominant one. Thus, hospital means today a ceremonial group and its chapel.

Japiggua (Tarascan). The king or owner of an animal species (usually fish or cattle); also, an animal which excretes coins. Often identified or connected with the Devil.

Jefe politico. Chief authority of a district during the Porfirio Diaz regime.

K'uagari (Tarascan). Giants, legendary people who lived before the advent of Christianity.

Mayordomia. Office of a mayordomo.

Mayordomo. Originally, steward of a sodality. Presently sponsor of the festival to some saint; also, one of the officers in the hospital. Mayordomo is not synonymous with carguero. Carguero is the general term for religious officer; only certain cargueros are also called mayordomo.

Pindecuario (Spanish from Tarascan). In colonial times, a list of the financial obligations of a village and its officers toward the financing of the Church and its festivals.

Priosta. Main officer of the hospital.

Principales. Originally, Indians of noble status. Today elders or members of the cabildo.

Regidor. A member of the town council.

Semanero. A lesser official of the hospital, serving for a specified number of weeks.

Sinarquista. The Catholic, nationalist party (or a member of the party) which is strong among the peasants.

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